DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 242 813 UD 023 449

AUTHOR	Farkas, Susan C., Ed.
TITLE	Changes & Challenges: City Schools in America. Thirteen Journalists Look at Our Nation's Schools.
INSTITUTION	Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY	Ford Foundation, New York, N.Y.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-937846-95-3
PUB DATE	83
NOTE	335p.; Additional funding from the Roosevelt Centennial Trust, U.S. Government Agencies and national organizations, and participating news organizations.
AVAILABLE FROM	IEL Publications, 1001 Connecticut Ave., Suite 310, Washington, DC 20036 ($7.50).
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - General (020) -- Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	American Indians; Black Students; Busing; Counseling; Dropouts; Education Work Relationship; Elementary Secondary Education; Enrollment Trends; Higher Education; Illiteracy; Microcomputers; *Minority Groups; *Reading; *School Business Relationship; *School Demography; *School Desegregation; Urban Population; *Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	*Fellows in Education Journalism Program; Tribally Controlled Schools; Urban and Minority Education Fellowship Program

ABSTRACT

Positive and negative aspects of urban and minority education are discussed in this volume of news series and newspaper articles by 13 journalists, all participants in either the Fellows Education Journalism program or the Urban and Minority Education Fellowship and Study Grant programs. Section One, on the changing demographics of city schools, contains the following articles: "Overview of Student Enrollment," by James Bencivenga; "Minorities: Classroom Crisis," by Robert A. Frahm; "Counseling for Filipino Students," by Linda Ogawa Ramirez; "Southeast Asian Refugees in Schools," by John C. Furey; "Indian Children in Detroit," by Rick Smith; and "Tribally Controlled Community Colleges," by Albert E. Bruno. Section Two, on desegregation in the 1980s, has articles entitled "Putting the Brakes on Busing," by Amy Goldstein; and "The Struggle for Integration," by Jacalyn Golston. In Section Three, which deals with new links between and among business, work, and education, the following articles appear: "Big City Schools and Technology," by James Bencivenga; "Education: Whose Business Is It?" by Linda Wallace Williams; "From School to Work: A Leap of Despair," by Milton Jordan; and "Latino Youth Who Don't Finish High School," by Jose Antonio Burciaga. Finally, Section Four contains articles by Dale Rice and Laura Washington entitled, respectively, "Reading: Finding a Better Way," and "Illiteracy: An Education Crisis." A list of journalists who have participated in the Fellows in Educational Journalism Program since 1976, and the newspapers in which their articles have appeared, is appended. (CMG)

Changes & Challenges: City Schools in America

Edited by Susan C. Farkas

ED242813

UD023449

Thirteen Journalists Look At Our Nation's Schools

Business/ Work/ Education: New Linkages

Changing Demographics of City Schools

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Changes & Challenges: City Schools in America

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THIRTEEN JOURNALISTS LOOK AT
OUR NATION'S SCHOOLS

Susan C. Farkas, Editor

FELLOWS IN
EDUCATION
JOURNALISM

A PROGRAM OF THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, INC. WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 83-82654
ISBN 0–937846–95–3

Prepared under a grant from the Ford Foundation with partial funding from the Roosevelt Centennial Trust.

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Additional copies of this report may be obtained for $7.50 each from IEL Publications, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 310, Washington, D.C. 20036
Telephone: (202) 822–8405

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PREFACE

City schools in America have changed dramatically in the last ten years: so-called "minority" students are now the majority in almost every major city; there is indication that test scores that were steadily declining for the past twenty years are starting to make the turn upward; and, the business community is beginning to get involved on various levels with the local schools.

We sought to look at positive as well as negative aspects of urban education and the education of minority students in various states. We hoped to identify factors that are causing improvements and better understand the problems that still exist. In the Spring of 1982 The Institute for Educational Leadership competitively selected eight outstanding journalists to receive Fellowships enabling each to take a six-week leave of absence to study and report on urban and minority education issues of particular interest to their local readers.

Joining the Fellows were seven reporters from minority news organizations chosen by the Institute to receive week-long Study Grants. The Study Grants were developed to encourage minority newspaper participation because we found that it was difficult for financially strapped minority news organizations to release their reporters for longer term professional development programs. This volume contains the work of thirteen of the Fellows and Study Grantees.

This monograph contains news series and articles based on the Fellows' and Study Grantees' work that appeared in newspapers throughout the country. The stories are organized into four topic areas:

- Changing Demographics of City Schools
- Desegregation in the Eighties
- Business/Work/Education: New Linkages
- Reading in Urban Schools

The Fellows in Education Journalism program was initiated by the Ford Foundation in 1976. the program is also sponsored by participating news organizations across the country, other foundations, United States Government Agencies, and national organizations. The Urban and Minority Education Fellowship and Study Grant programs were sponsored by the Ford Foundation with additional support from the Roosevelt Center-

nial Youth Project.

This volume highlights the significant demographic changes that have altered the make-up of city schools in America and points up many of the challenges our nation faces in its quest for excellence in education.

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Changing Demographics of City Schools

The Christian Science Monitor

Overview of Student Enrollment

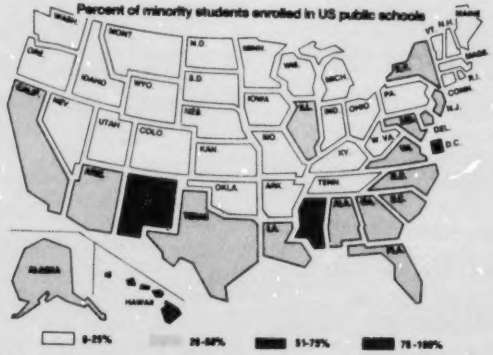
By James Bencivenga

Huge minority enrollment challenges public education

Not since the first three decades of this century have the nation's schools been at such a demographic crossroads. Then, the task was the assimilation of millions of children whose parents had flooded into the country from southern and eastern Europe.

Now, almost unnoticed, the nation's attendance map for public schools has again been redrawn. The schools in 23 of the 25 largest cities in the United States have predominantly minority enrollments, with blacks, Hispanics, and Asians the largest groups.

In these same city schools 1 student in 10 was a minority in 1950. In 1960, 1 in 3 was a minority; in 1970 it was 1 in 2; in 1980, it was 7 out of 10. And in 1990, 9 out of 10 students in big-city districts will be minority, according to statistics recently published by the Joint Center for Political Studies.



Education officials say that if public education is to achieve in the final two decades of this century what it did in the first three – helped shepherd millions of young Americans into productive roles in society – the following questions must be answered:

- What must schools in the major urban centers do to give the majority of their students the skills necessary for entering the economic mainstream? These schools have the greatest numbers of children requiring compensatory instruction. They're at the center of intense debate over desegregation, busing, and bilingual education issues. And they're located where the local property-tax base is most heavily burdened.
- Can a proper federal role in providing needed funds, compatible

About the Author

JAMES BENCIVENGA has been with *The Christian Science Monitor* since 1980 as assistant editor and writer for the education page. His education-rich background includes teaching at an Indian Mission School in Canada, at the LaSalle School for Boys (a reform school), and at the Bozeman Senior High School in Bozeman, Montana.

Bencivenga has a BA degree in English from LeMoyne College, Syracuse, New York, and a Master's degree in English from the University of Denver, Colorado.

In 1982, Bencivenga received a three-month grant to work as consultant to the U.S. Office of Education for the study of micro-computers in prisons. This expertise led to his interest in the public schools and technology.

During his Fellowship, Bencivenga traveled to Big City Schools throughout the country—Boston, Washington, D.C., New York City, Houston, Pittsburgh, Denver and San Francisco—to document how the central administrations of these school systems are incorporating advancements in technology into their curriculum and management.

with a tradition of local control over education, be hammered out politically? During the dollar-flush '60s and '70s, the issue of adequate funding for city schools was never resolved.

● Must racially isolated communities see their public schools slip back toward a de facto "separate but equal" status, and what are the implications for US democracy if this is allowed to happen?

"For the first time we have a nation whose needs for public schools are very different," says Harold Hodgkinson, a senior fellow at the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington. "Today's 45-year-old white male worker has to realize his social security check is going to be paid or not paid as a result of the education a black, Hispanic, or Asian student receives in a city school."

Demographic changes are already sparking debates on the issue of equal educational opportunity for nonwhite students vs. academic excellence in more affluent white suburban districts, education observers say.

Minorities that made up only 10 percent of the public-school population in 1950 are now up to 45 percent in some states. A look at minority public-school enrollment in the following states helps tell the story: New Mexico (57 percent); Mississippi (51.6); Texas (45.9); California (42.9); Arizona (33.7); Maryland (33.5); Florida (32.2); and New York (32).

'Unless we improve city schools, how can our corporations compete in the world economy?'

"If anybody believed benign neglect worked with 10 percent of the population, who is going to believe that 45 percent, as it is in some states, can be neglected," says Mr. Hodgkinson.

Beginning with the 1980-81 school year, more than a sixth of all the nation's public-school students have gone to schools in metropolitan New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Washington. All of these areas have small white minorities and large numbers of black, Hispanic, or Asian children in their central-city school districts.

"If whole states are either majority minority or close to it," says Mary Berry, commissioner on the US Commission of Civil Rights, "then we must change the record that too often in the past meant quality education is not equated with minority education. The nation is going to have to change this image with a commitment to equity and excellence at the same time."

"Corporations lament they are spending too much money educating and retraining their new employees on basic skills. They pay for this lack of education twice, at tax time and in training overhead," says Cicero Wilson, a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank in Washington, D.C.

"Unless we improve city schools, how can our corporations compete in the world economy?" Mr. Wilson asks. "The current emphasis on improving math and science curriculum must include inner-city schools. They can't be left out of the computer revolution."

But education officials say it won't be easy to reconcile the different needs of states like Texas, Utah, or Colorado, which have increasing enrollments, with those of New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts, all still experiencing decline. "Massachusetts is laying off teachers, while Texas is in the middle of a severe teacher shortage. That makes for divergent policies," Hodgkinson says.

Declining enrollment also presents many states with the challenges of a "graying" faculty, teacher layoffs, and the need to close yet more schools. Growth states are scrambling to find new classroom space and keep experienced teachers. Some are even experimenting with merit pay to attract scarce math, science, and bilingual teachers.

Also, the Hispanic population is at this point still far more geographically concentrated than the black population. Most Hispanic schoolchildren are in California and Texas. New York, New Mexico, Illinois, Florida, Arizona, and Colorado follow. The 1980 census showed that close to half of the nation's Hispanic population was in 10 metropolitan areas.

In Los Angeles, the Hispanic enrollment has increased from 20 percent in 1968 to 49 percent in 1982. Over the same period, a similar change occurred in Dade County, Fla. (Miami). In Chicago, the proportion of Hispanic students more than doubled, reaching 20 percent, as Hispanic students replaced whites as the second largest group of students after blacks. A similar change took place in Dallas, and the percentage of Hispanic enrollment grew even more, from 13 percent to 28 percent, in Houston, the South's largest city.

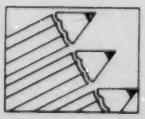
Most black students attend schools in just nine states: New York, Texas, Illinois, California, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, Louisiana, and Michigan.

Many of the major urban centers of California and the Pacific Northwest experienced not only a substantial growth of their Hispanic population but also large increases in the number of Asian children. The San Francisco school district has far more Asian than black, white, or Hispanic students.

The Journal Times
Racine, Wisconsin

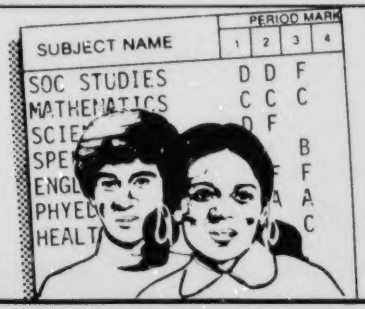
Minorities: Classroom Crisis

A Six-Part Series



By Robert A. Frahm

Poor grades big problem



MINORITIES: Classroom crisis

Although minorities account for 27 percent of all students in the Unified School District, they make up much smaller proportions of top-level courses. A sampling of this year's classes:

8th grade accelerated science..... 4% minorities
German 1..... 6%
Advanced chemistry..... 4%
Physics..... 4%
Calculus-geometry..... 6%
Shakespeare..... 10%
Advanced English..... 12%
American literature..... 10%

Meanwhile, minority student proportions are considerably higher in low-level courses:

General math (8th grade)..... 47%
Reading growth (remedial 8th grade)..... 49%
General math (high school) 46%
Basic Life Science..... 43%
Basic English 1..... 50%

THERE may be another reason black and Hispanic students don't take tougher courses: poor grades.

Biology and geometry, sophomore courses, are about as far as many minority students go, according to Unified District Research Director Orval Totdahl.

Across the district, 28 percent of the black and Hispanic students enrolled in biology were getting F's, Totdahl said.

Many of the rest were getting D's, he said.

"They'd be fools to go further," said Totdahl, a critic of grading practices.

And there is a wide disparity in grades from one teacher to the next, according to a recent study by Totdahl. While one junior English teacher gives 9 percent D's and F's, another gives 75 percent Ds and Fs, for example.

"It's like Russian roulette," said Totdahl.

The discrepancies are not confined to high school. They begin as early as fourth grade, the first point at which letter grades are given.

A study last year, for instance, found that 18 percent of a sampling of black Racine fourth-graders got F's in math, compared with 3 percent of white students. Only 4 percent of the black fourth-graders got A's, compared with 27 percent of the whites.

John Aceto, Unified's Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, said such disparities are difficult to explain, but appear to be a form of racism.

"It's an insidious thing," said Aceto. "No one would admit to it. The perceptions of people about other people are deep-rooted, most of the time unconscious, but it's hard to deny the facts and the data available."

Some teachers, however, contend the reason for the low grades is that minority students often miss class, turn in fewer assignments, or fail to meet course standards.

Charles Harmon, science department chairman at Case High, said about half the minority students in his biology classes are failing.

"They come in here and think they can get away with

About the Author

ROBERT A. FRAHM joined the *Journal Times* in 1971. During most of his 12 years at the newspaper, he has covered education, but also has worked a variety of other assignments, including county government news and feature writing.

A former teacher, Frahm, 36, has won several writing awards, including five in contests sponsored by the Education Writers Association. Frahm is an honor graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and holds a bachelor's degree in Education with an English major and a journalism minor.

He was an IEL Journalism Fellow in 1978 and conducted a three-month study on competency testing.

During the study on urban schools, Frahm consulted with experts across the country on post-desegregation problems and then focused on those issues in Racine schools.

murder," he said. He pointed to his record book, referring to a specific student, a black girl. "Not a single assignment turned in during the entire quarter," he said.

"He (Totdahl) thinks everybody's giving them a hard time," said Harmon. "Nobody is. They're trying like mad to get them to do it."

At Horlick High School, Todd Johnson gave F's to 59 percent of his junior English students, according to the Unified survey.

Johnson said the students, white and minority, in many cases were unmotivated and did not want to be in school.

"I've got to have standards," said Johnson. "If I bastardize them, then I don't deserve the respect of the community ... To me, the worst form of racism is passing minority students on without having taught them anything."

Kenneth Wagner, a veteran of 28 years at Horlick, said successful students are those "... who come from homes where education is respected and students are highly motivated."

Among minority students, peer pressure often takes over, said Wagner.

"Kids would rather fail. They would rather be accepted," he said.

Wagner said the school board complained a few years ago because board members felt grades were too high.

"On the one hand we're told, 'Be more demanding' ... Then comes the criticism we're failing too damn many people," he said. "The administration and the board can't have it both ways."

Journal Times photo by Paul Roberts

For minority students, academic problems worsen during high school years

Things get tougher in college

WHILE many of his classmates take college-level courses, University of Wisconsin-Parkside freshman Undrah Cornelious struggles through basic algebra and basic English.

They are non-credit remedial courses. The toughest courses he recalls taking back in Racine's Park High School were algebra and life science. Cornelious, who is black, says he is getting D's at Parkside.

"I don't study," he says. "That's my problem."

Minority students, often ill-prepared in high school, find out that academic trouble follows them right into college.

The average grade point for minority freshmen at Parkside last fall was 1.67, between a D and a C, compared with 2.29, just above a C, for white freshmen, said Parkside Assistant Chancellor for Educational Services Carla Stoffle.

Minority students drop out at a rapid rate. Of Parkside's 195 minority freshmen in 1980, 49 earned enough credits to become sophomores the following year, Stoffle said.

"One of the problems some minority kids have is they tend to apply late, register late, not to take placement tests prior to registration," said Stoffle. "There's really not much chance if you're letting them take courses they're not going to be able to pass."

Lawrence Logan, executive assistant to the chancellor, said placement test scores "... jump out at you and tell you minority students are less prepared."

Logan started a program in 1979 called CHAMP — Creating Higher Aspirations and Motivations Program. The summer program is an intensive, no-nonsense six-week session focusing on academics for Racine and Kenosha minority high school students.

The idea is to give students better study habits and encourage them to go back and try the more difficult college-bound courses.

"You couldn't find a black kid in any of the high-level science courses, literature courses," said Logan. "If we got a ninth-grader to take biology or chemistry, the idea the next summer was to go back and take the next course."

Logan, who no longer runs the program, often would check up on students by calling their homes. In some cases, that was discouraging, he said.

"If I had to put the blame anywhere, I would put it back into the homes," he said. "...They (students) would be down at the Breakthru Center, the John Bryant Center, at the Y, track practice — anywhere but home studying."

Still, the program has expanded — as many as 250 students are expected this summer, compared with about 100 the first year — and Logan believes it can make a difference for those who are willing to stick it out.

"Now if you go around to our schools, you're going to find there are black kids taking courses in chemistry, trigonometry," he said. "Now the kids are starting to believe in themselves."

Parents can help

HE CARRIES a tough schedule, studies several hours a night, and hopes to go to law school, but school wasn't always so important to Victor Thomas.

"Up till I was in seventh grade, I didn't really care about studying," said the Horlick High School senior.

But then his father had a stern talk with him about school, Victor said. He began making the honor roll and now, although his grades have fallen to about average, he is one of only a few black students in courses like physics and advanced trigonometry.

What happened with Victor's father happens all too rarely with minority parents, educators say.

Yet, it may be a key to solving some of the academic problems that plague many black and Hispanic students.

John Thomas of 934 Wilson St. not only talks about school with his son, but, "When there is something not right, I contact the school myself," he said.

William Trent, an educational researcher with Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, said, "I would encourage parents to take as much involvement in schoolwork as they possibly can and participate in school as much as they can.

"Teachers are humans, and once they see a parent taking interest, most teachers are responsive to that ... It casts the child in a different light."

In many cases, however, minority parents feel alienated from school, "... a sense of distance between themselves and the school or themselves and the teacher," said Trent.

"They are good parents, but they just don't know how

to be involved or what specifically to do," he said.

In a few cases, Racine teachers have begun to reach toward those parents. At Olympia Brown School, teachers Joyce Vargo and Charlene Gosbee considered parents a crucial part of a summer program to boost black and Hispanic students into higher reading groups.

The two visited the homes of their students.

"It made a difference," said Vargo. "Parents were very open, and they were kind to us ... I think suddenly school wasn't just someone who called to say, 'You're in trouble.' School was the lady who came and sat in your kitchen and talked about vocabulary and brought over a dictionary."

Gosbee added, "There's a cliche that inner city parents don't care ... They do care."

Still, schools often have difficulty attracting minority parents, said Gifford Elementary Principal Michael Frontier. At Gifford, for example, most minority students are bused, and the distance from their homes is a problem, he said.

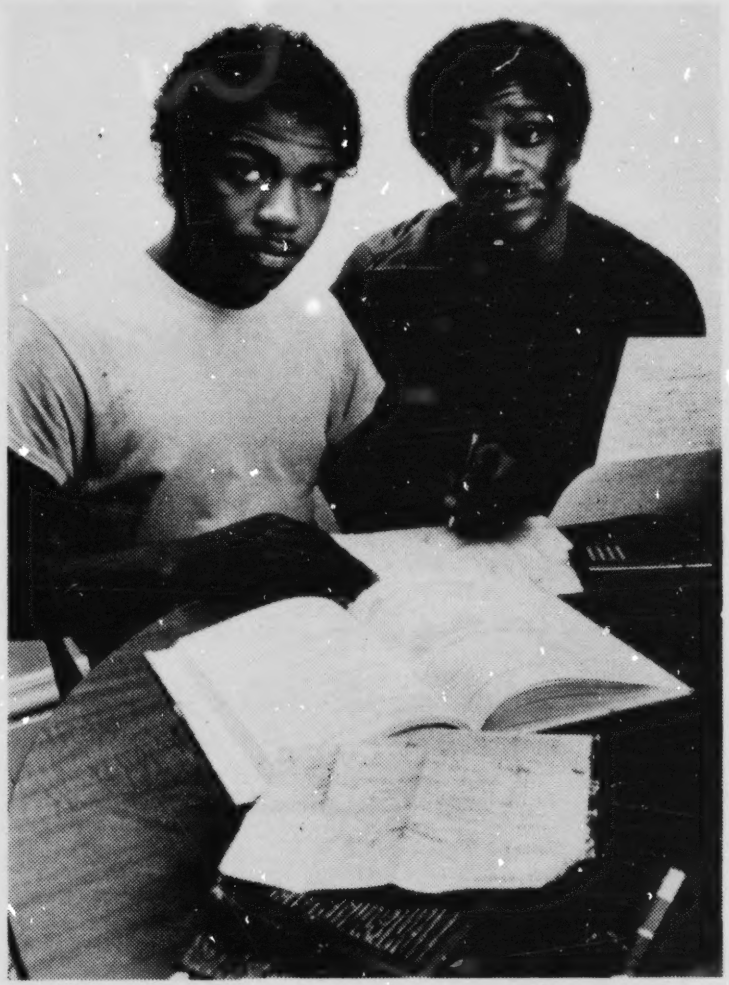
"It kills us," he said. "We can't get parents from the city to here ... I have no minority parents in PTA."

LaVerne Diem, principal at Goodland School, blames a bad economy, saying schools have a harder time reaching low-income families who don't have telephones or can't afford to keep their cars running.

"You have to have the conviction and the time to go up and knock on that door," she said.

Diem said Goodland provides free transportation and babysitting to improve attendance at parent conferences.

"I find most parents, when you take an interest in their kid, believe you me, they come across," she said.



Journal Times photo by Mark Hertzberg

Victor Thomas and dad, John, take school seriously

School

By Robert A. Frahm
of the Journal Times

His high school schedule is no breeze.

Calculus, statistics, German, physics, English literature — Danny Martin estimates he puts in four, five, even six hours a night on homework. In many ways, a typical college-bound 17-year-old, this Case High School senior.

But in one way he is not. Danny Martin is black.

He is one of three black students in his computer class, one of two in physics. He is the only black student in his statistics and German classes. In calculus, he has one minority classmate, a Japanese exchange student.

"It's been the same way every year," says Martin. "... I expect to be one of a few."

Something is missing from physics, calculus, literature — all the top classes in Racine schools.

Look into the classrooms, and you'll find few, if any, black or Hispanic students. You are not likely to find them in the jazz band, on the student newspaper or on the honor roll, either.

woes plague minorities

In a district where one of every four students is black or Hispanic, the top academic classes are nearly all white.

It is part of a pattern of academic mediocrity or failure for minority students in a district that took pride in the desegregation of schools eight years ago.

Figures indicate the problem begins at elementary school and gets sharply worse in junior high and high school. It is a knotty issue, one that has some educators scratching their heads, others angry, and a few seeking answers — with limited success.

"It's sickening," says Deputy Superintendent Drue Guy. "Some of them were scheduled in three home economics courses and three industrial arts courses and thought they were getting ready for college."

Although Racine is hardly alone — national statistics show similar trends — the numbers are disturbing, in some cases dismal:

• **THE AVERAGE** fourth-grade black math pupil in Racine scored at the 64th percentile on a national scale — a good mark — but the average 12th-grade black math pupil scored at the 29th percentile, according to a 1980 study. The pattern is similar in other subjects, with the gap between minorities and whites growing steadily wider from eighth through 12th grade.

• **EVEN THOUGH** they generally get into easier courses, minorities get worse grades than whites do. A 1980-81 junior high study found that whites got A's 26 percent of the time, Hispanics 9 percent, and blacks 7 percent. Whites got F's 5 percent of the time compared with 10 percent for Hispanics and 15 percent for blacks.

• **COMPETENCY TESTS** showed that 25 percent of last spring's minority graduates failed to master at least one of four basic skills areas, compared with 4½ percent of white graduates.

• **ONE OF** every four black high school students and one of every five Hispanic students dropped out of school last year, compared with one of every 10 white students.

Why?

Some teachers and principals point to single-parent families, poverty, unemployment, and other problems that occur statistically more often among minorities.

While schools cannot ignore those things, there are other reasons, too. Many of them happen in school, and many of them start in the early grades.

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Third-grade teacher Sandra Hadley is asking questions about a story in a reading book. Hands pop up around Room 56 at Gifford School, waving, stretching. This is the top reading group. Of 29 children, three are black, here because they did extra work in a special program that started last summer.

"I have taught high groups before," says Hadley, "and they have been lily-white."

From the time Racine children enter kindergarten, they are split into ability groups in reading, and those groups usually can be identified by race.

Consider second grade, for example. Among white children, 14 percent are in the lowest of three ability groups, compared with 29 percent of black and Hispanic second-graders. The top group includes 48 percent of the white students, but only 26 percent of the black and Hispanic pupils.

Children are placed in those groups sometimes on the basis of tests, but often on teacher judgment. And some officials are questioning those judgments.

"I have no idea how they do it — the whim of the teacher," said Unified Research Director Orval Totdahl. He said his own adopted daughter, who is black, was put in a lower reading group even though test scores and a previous teacher's recommendation indicated she should not be there.

Said one elementary school principal, who asked not to be named, "In all candor, I think racism does color teachers' perceptions."

However, University of Wisconsin-Parkside Associate Professor of Education Barbara Shade said while that may be partly true, "It's not all racism."

What it is, according to Shade's research, is a difference in learning styles.

While middle-class children are likely to develop an analytical, step-by-step style, children of low-income families often "... are the more intuitive thinkers, the more creative thinkers," she said.

That means the low-income child may be more active, "... the one looking out the window or looking all around," she said. "Or they'll be making something. They have to keep their mind busy. They'll be shaking their legs, driving the teacher up the wall because she's so boring."

But schools have done little to adapt, she said. In most schools, the teacher still stands in front of the class asking questions, and students mechanically recite answers, said Shade.

"It's against all we know about the development of children," she said. "We are still back in what I call the frontier classroom."

When schools can't handle those more active children, "they ability group them, they stereotype them, they send them to psychologists, they say they can't learn ... they call them behavior problems, and finally they push them out," she said.

And ability groups stay fairly rigid from one grade to the next, educators say.

"Once they get zonked into whatever track they're in, it's very difficult (to get out)," said Hadley, the Gifford teacher.

Ability grouping, which allows one group to work faster and read more textbooks than another, is popular among teachers, but Assistant Superintendent for Instruction John Aceto said research indicates it is not the best method.

Gifford School Principal Michael Frontier sees grouping as a dilemma for black and brown students.

"It shouldn't be that big a problem because you're talking about kids being maybe 200 pages ahead," he says. "Big deal."

But Frontier and others know it is a big deal, and one of the reasons is that elementary teachers talk to junior high teachers about which students should be recommended for advanced level courses.

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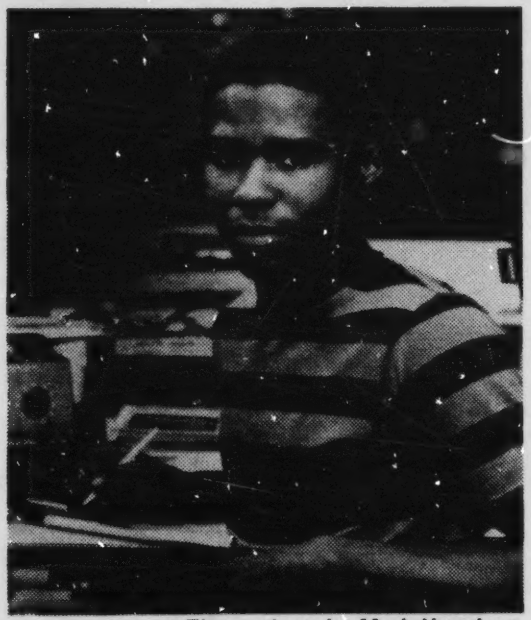
Judith Stockmon, 16, now a high school junior, remembers she was disappointed back in 7th grade at Mitchell Junior High School when her name wasn't included on an early list for 8th-grade accelerated science. Only after final grades came out was she put on the list.

"I got an A in science," said Stockmon, who is black, "and the teacher came up and said, 'Judith, you're a lot smarter than you look.'"



Journal Times photo by Mark Hertzberg

Danny Martin has tough workload

Decisions made as early as sixth and seventh grade influence what happens to students in high school.

Those who miss accelerated math in junior high, for example, are likely to never have a chance to take calculus in high school.

"It's your one and only chance to get in," said sixth-grade teacher Anne Fox.

Fox, of Olympia Brown School, has taught a summer math refresher course for selected minority students to boost them into advanced math at junior high. Similar courses in English, science, and social studies have been set up in what is called Project Equalize.

"Teachers across the district have been so stringent that unless a kid met the criteria he didn't get in, and they found no minority kids were getting in," said Fox.

"My attitude is even if you're on the border, I put you in ... I probably put more kids in accelerated math than any teacher in the district."

But teachers and counselors can do little to make students continue with tougher courses if the students don't want to.

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Horlick senior Dave Garcia has taken his share of tough courses. But, he says, "It's not cool to say you're going to go home and do your homework tonight."

At Case, meanwhile, junior Delon Cannon says, "I ain't taking no college bound classes. My mother just told me, 'Take the easy classes.'"

Students and teachers suggest that black and Hispanic students often shun upper-level courses because they fear the courses are too difficult or because those courses are predominantly white.

Some students say friends berate those who succeed academically.

"You'll be right in between," said Horlick High School senior Kendell Actkins, who is black and who is enrolled in several upper-level courses. "You won't be accepted by minorities; you won't be accepted by whites."

Programs such as CHAMP at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside and Project Equalize are beginning to chip away at some of the inequities in course placements.

In addition, after Unified's Elementary Reading Coordinator, Nancy Neill, prodded elementary principals to move more minority students into higher reading groups, there was some promising early improvement in those numbers.

But much remains to be done, and some signs are discouraging:

• **THE SCHOOL BOARD** has cut money from programs such as Standards, an elementary remedial program with a high number of minority students.

• **FEDERAL** programs such as Chapter 1, offering math, reading and language help for low-income students, are cutting services as budgets dwindle. Title 7 desegregation aid, which gave Racine schools more than $4 million between 1974 and 1980, has been eliminated.

• **SOME SCHOOL** people fear that Unified's District Concerns Committee — which is focusing on minority course placements and other issues — may fizzle now that the school board has decided to end Deputy Superintendent Guy's job as an economy measure.

Guy, the district's top-ranking black administrator, was instrumental in forming the committee.

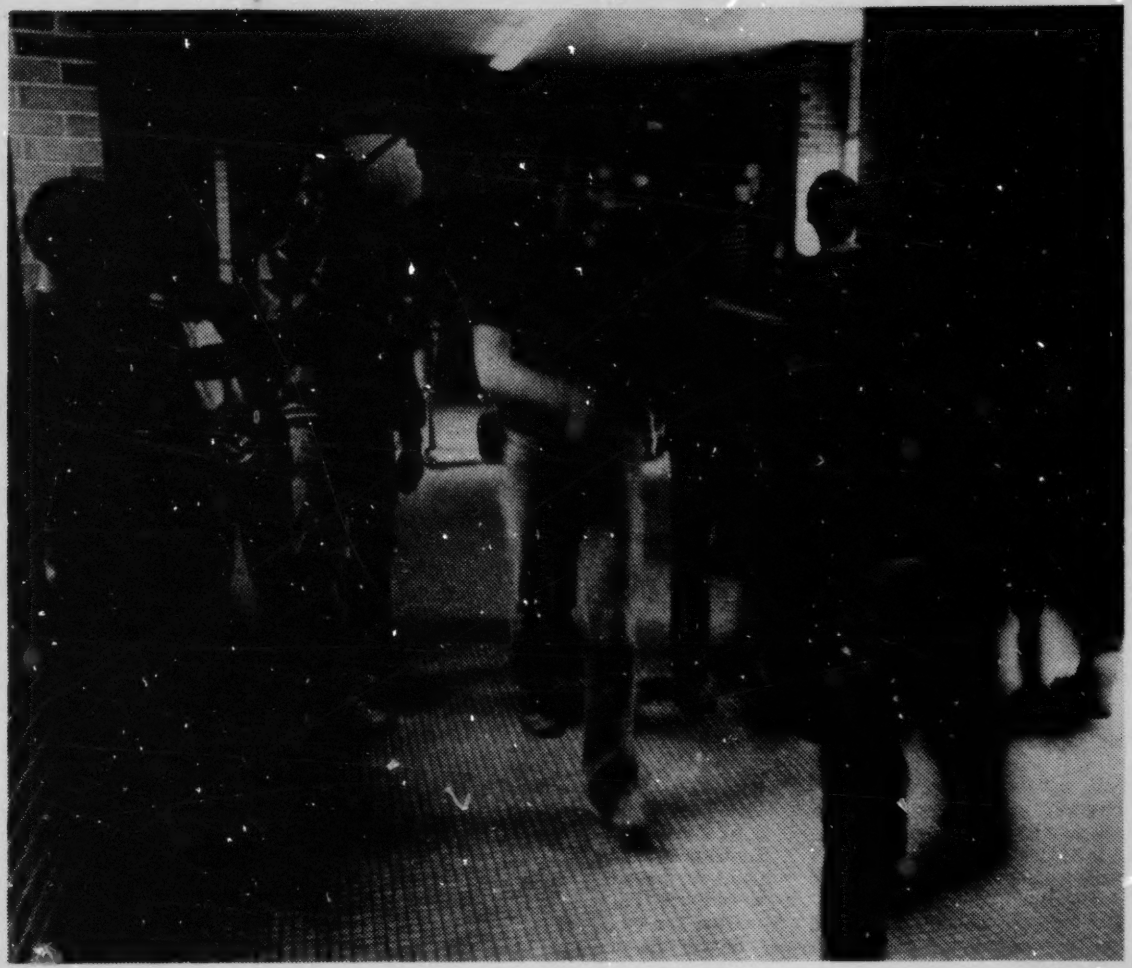
The problem of low minority achievement is one schools can hardly afford to ignore.

Minorities make up 27 percent of Racine's school population, and that figure is expected to reach 35 percent within a decade.

Will those students continue to miss the best courses Racine schools have to offer? If they do take them, will they fail?

Until schools, teachers, parents can turn around the academic problems, "we're all losers," says Guy. "Society loses, the family loses, the student definitely loses."

Adds researcher Totdahl, "It's a serious moral question this district ought to address."



Black and Hispanic students in Racine schools: low-level courses, bad grades, too many dropouts

Racial gains slow

Ohio district seeks answer

SHAKER HEIGHTS, Ohio — Even in schools in this affluent Cleveland suburb, academic achievement often boils down to a matter of black and white.

Here — where schools turn out a wealth of National Merit Scholars, where 85 percent of the students go to college, where officials talk of an elitist "Shaker attitude" — the distinction between top and bottom students still can be marked by race.

The highest academic classes are mostly white, the lowest mostly black.

"No matter what we try to do," says Shaker Heights High School Principal C.A. Zimmerman, "... we don't seem to be able to change that."

Much of the curriculum is aimed at college-bound students, but Shaker Heights marks its courses by levels: remedial, regular, honors, and advanced placement.

Although the regular level closely reflects the 42 percent proportion of minority students — virtually all the minorities in the 5,000-student district are black — the top and bottom levels show sharp disproportions, according to a 1981 study.

That trend continues in registration figures for next year, Zimmerman said.

In 11th grade, for instance, 16 percent of the students registered for advanced placement English are black, compared with 84 percent for remedial 11th-grade English. Black students account for 6 percent of next year's third-year French classes and 10 percent in advanced placement math, but 85 percent in remedial math.

Such disparities have drawn criticism from some quarters, including the Urban League of Greater Cleveland and a black parents group.

"We find students of average intelligence and above-average intelligence in low-level courses," said Elizabeth Walker, president of Concerned Parents of Shaker Heights.

A retired elementary school principal, Walker said she is waiting to see whether the district follows suggestions in a 1982 study of Shaker Heights schools by Western Michigan University.

Among other things, that study recommends pre-school and primary programs to help low-achieving children, better efforts to reach parents, and better coordination among programs for low achievers.

"I'm frustrated," said Walker, who added that those black students who do get into high level courses often feel isolated.

One of those students, 17-year-old Ernest Green, is taking band, orchestra, advanced placement French, advanced placement British literature, and honors math. He also is president of the senior class. He said black students often don't like other black students to succeed academically.

"It's a choice of being black and popular or black and an achiever," said Green.

But if student attitude is a problem, so are the attitudes of parents and teachers, said Reginald Blue, director of pupil personnel.

"Someone is allowing the youngster to achieve to a lower degree and accepting that," he said. "If we are talking about the kid's parents, it's irresponsible. If we're looking at it in terms of a counselor being white and (the student) being minority ... it's one of the most invidious kinds of racism...

"Kids are in many instances going to take the easy way out. Somebody has to stop and say, 'This will not be accepted.'"

Zimmerman said the problem of course selection "... will always exist until you get to it at the seventh-grade level. He talked about the possibility of identifying talented seventh-graders and giving them additional help to boost them into higher level courses. Racine has such a program; Shaker Heights does not.

Zimmerman said he fears the district could not do that because it would mean setting up a segregated program.

So what is happening in junior high?

"We still see the pattern continuing," said James Paces, principal at Woodbury Junior High School.

At a recent awards ceremony, 38 students got honor keys for grade point averages of 3.5 or better. Two were black, Paces said.

What can be done?

Shaker Heights has taken some tentative steps:

• **BLACK PARENTS** have organized to address the issue. The group led by Walker prodded schools to examine the inequities of the levels system. Another group at Woodbury Junior High is putting a peer tutoring group together and discussing study skills and learning styles.

• **PROJECT EXCEL**, a program for students not reaching their potential, has been expanded from high schools to include junior highs. The program not only works on study skills, but helps black students deal with the discomfort they feel in a system that reflects white, middle-class values, curriculum, and rules, said project director John Addison.

• **THE SCHOOL** system has eliminated some ability level classes and has reduced the size of remedial classes, according to Research Director Mark Freeman.

• **TEACHERS** have undergone training in a well-known program — Racine schools use the Shaker Heights model — designed to raise teacher expectations for all students. However, Delores Groves, a principal in charge of the program, said the district has not followed through on the workshops. The last one was held in 1981, she said.

• **PERHAPS** most important, school researchers, like those in Racine, have studied the problem, and the issue of racial disparity is a familiar one to many parents and teachers.

Many other school systems either have done no research or are reluctant to share it, says researcher Freeman.

In Wisconsin, officials in urban districts such as Milwaukee, Ke-

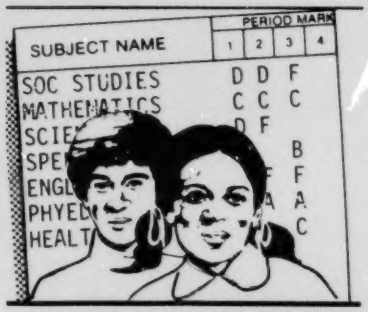
nosha, and Beloit said they have done no studies on course selection by minorities.

"People don't want to know about these ... issues," said Freeman. "When the data is presented, school boards and policymakers don't want to hear it because they don't know what to do."

But schools must try, he said.

"The mission of the American public school is ... to make sure (children) can read, write, and calculate," he said. "If we don't do it. The social cost of that is incredible."

School-business partnership aids students



MINORITIES:
Classroom crisis

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Thanks to IBM, General Motors, and the Potomac Electric Power Co., 14-year-old Jerome Booker made the leap to high school a year early.

He is one of a select group of ninth-graders — there are only 33 this year — attending Dunbar Senior High School in a tough engineering curriculum that is part of an intriguing partnership between schools and the business community.

Dunbar's engineering program is one of five business-sponsored programs — others are hotel management-culinary arts, communications, health, and business-finance — started at five different high schools last fall in an effort to turn out better graduates.

Officials hope programs like Dunbar's will increase interest by minorities — Dunbar's enrollment is 99 percent minority students — in areas such as science and engineering.

Nationwide, the proportion of blacks and Hispanics choosing technical fields lags well behind the proportion of whites. The Scientific Manpower Commission in Washington indicates, for example, that in 1980, blacks and Hispanics accounted for only 5 percent of all civil engineers and about 3 percent of all physicists and astronomers, even though they made up about 16 percent of the civilian labor force.

In District of Columbia Public Schools, the high school diploma hadn't been worth much in the eyes of most businesses, said Pete Weaver, executive assistant to the superintendent.

"Both business and public education were spending vast sums of money for the same purposes, and yet graduates were not getting jobs, and businesses were not getting the kind of employees they wanted," he said.

In fact, said Weaver, "This business community got a bad case of gas every time they thought about the school system."

The idea for partnerships between business and schools came from Superintendent Floretta McKenzie, who picked Weaver, a former real estate developer, to get the program under way.

The idea was not simply to ask for money, but to ask businesses to step in, write curriculum, design classrooms, provide equipment, and even assist with teaching, according to Weaver.

"Too often, schools are coming to business with a preconceived notion and asking for a check," said Weaver. "That had to change ... We really had to resist the notion that I was here as a fund-raiser."

At Dunbar, IBM advised the school on equipment, donated some computers, and helped lay out the lab. General Motors sponsored a summer training program for teachers.

The pre-engineering program, which will include sophomores next year, juniors the next, and seniors the next, will be academically rigor-

ous, said math teacher and program coordinator Judith Richardson.

For example, Booker and his ninth-grade classmates at Dunbar start an hour earlier and leave an hour later than the rest of the students. They take courses like algebra, history, science, English, and engineering drawing.

"We average two to three hours of homework, sometimes longer, but it's worth it," says Booker.

Said Richardson, "It's a shame if you get to be 18 and decide you want to be a scientist and have had no science courses, if you get to be 18 and decide you want to be a computer programmer and you've never seen a computer before."

Dunbar Principal Tom Harper hopes the program will expand to as many as 500 students, nearly one-third of the student body, within four or five years. He said it is not restricted to potential engineers.

The Dunbar ninth-graders were selected from among the top eighth graders in the district and had to get through screenings and tests in order to be enrolled.

"We're hopeful they'll be prepared to leave here to go to higher education — not (just) schools of engineering, but medicine, law, business," Harper said.

Although schools and businesses have approached one another before, the kind of partnership formed here may be unique, said Weaver. "There are a lot of adopt-a-school programs, but it's rare you'll find a school system asking a major employer to go back to the drawing board with them," he said.

However, while such partnerships may be helpful, they are not a lasting solution, according to F. James Rutherford, chief education officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The association itself is the recipient of a $1.67 million grant from Standard Oil for a project called "Science Resources for Schools."

According to Rutherford, business partnerships raise the possibility of widening the gap between some schools and others.

"Not everyone is located near an IBM," he said.

He also suggested businesses may be tempted to project into the classroom their own philosophies of business and government.

And he questioned to what extent businesses would maintain a commitment to schools.

"The business of business is to contribute to the economy, to make jobs, products, rather than to bankroll education," he said.

"They can make things a little better, but in the end, the (school) system has to save itself."

Superintendent McKenzie said she hopes the Washington program is the start of a trend that will see businesses taking a greater role in schools.

"So often in this country, business sees it as something above and beyond what they should be doing," she said. "Hopefully, we can change the way business looks on the school district — often pointing fingers to say what we haven't done instead of trying to shape what happens."

Activities draw few minorities

Joe Knowlton, a drummer in Horlick High School's concert band, takes his music so seriously that his teacher says, "The guy is just on fire ... eager to learn."

But there is something else that sets this 17-year-old junior apart.

He is one of only two blacks among Horlick's 128 instrumental music students.

For all their popularity, for all their rhythm and swing, Horlick's prize-winning bands are missing something. They win their share of contests, but they don't win the hearts of Horlick's black and Hispanic students.

"We've been losing all sorts of good kids," said John Dorsey, director of Horlick's jazz band, where there are no blacks or Hispanics.

Horlick is not alone.

Music programs, drama classes, school newspaper staffs, ski clubs — many of the after-school activities that add strength and flavor to the curriculum at Racine schools — often are dominated by whites, according to surveys done by the Unified School District.

Minority students are well represented in areas like basketball, football, and track, but not in most other areas.

Although some officials say they are troubled by those numbers, at-

tempts to change the pattern have fizzled.

According to figures from a survey at the end of the 1981-82 school year:

• **OUT OF 93** members in Horlick's band, there were two black and four Hispanic students. The 23-member orchestra had no minority students, the 20-member swing choir had only one black and one Hispanic student.

• **CASE HIGH SCHOOL'S** girls' softball team had 33 members, all white. No minority students were on the golf or gymnastics teams. Two of the 42 baseball players, five of the 24 cheerleaders, one of the 33 swimmers, and two of the 55 swimmers were minorities.

• **HORLICK'S** student newspaper staff had no black students and one Hispanic student. The school's 75-member ski club had no blacks, three Hispanics.

• **TWO** black students and four Hispanic students were among the 174 students in instrumental music at Jerstad Junior High School.

"I don't know if we're ever going to get a handle on it," said Andrew Duncan, director of music for the Unified School District.

"I don't think it's just music," he said. "It's inconceivable there aren't some black students out there interested in chess ... interested in tennis. So why aren't there any black students playing tennis?"

In music, some minority students do sign up at elementary schools, but the number dwindles at junior high, and "... at senior high it's almost nil," said Duncan.

What are the reasons?

Cost may be one. Low-income families may not be able to rent an instrument, much less buy one. A trumpet, for instance, costs $350, a saxophone $800 or $900, Duncan said.

After-school transportation, especially for students bused far from their homes under Unified's desegregation plan, can make it more difficult to participate in activities.

"We put on a play here," said Gifford Elementary School Principal Michael Frontier. "To get minority kids to stay here without a bus becomes difficult."

Even where after-school activity buses run, they often don't stop close enough to students' homes, said Lorissa Jackson, a Case High School junior.

"The activity bus like stops at the stoplight at 16th and Green Bay Road," she said. "I don't feel there is a club that important to walk that far."

The most frequently mentioned problem, however, is student attitude.

Knowlton, the Horlick drummer, said black students who join band or choir, for instance, are ridiculed by friends.

"Mainly I think they look at it as a sissy sort of thing," he said. "I was in a marching band in Kenosha. My friends would like call you a 'cheese,' which means like a black guy trying to be like a white guy."

David Thomas, who is black, quit Horlick's band.

"Too much work for me," said the 18-year-old senior. "A couple hours a night, you have to take private lessons, compete in contests."

Donald Young, Horlick's concert band director, said that except for Knowlton, he has seen little success among black students.

"They don't push themselves," he said. "They are generally content

Journal Times photo by Paul Roberts

High School's concert band
Joe Knowlton is one of two blacks in Horlick

with a C grade. They don't do the things A and B students do."

Some minority students complain about the style of school music, said Rosa Estrada, a Case senior.

"It's like (they say), 'I don't want to listen to that — it's Lawrence Welk,' " she said.

Sometimes minority students simply feel unwelcome in after-school activities, Estrada said.

She said she joined Case's soccer team last year, but later quit because she got a job.

"I told the coach I wouldn't be coming out any more. The first thing he said is, 'Why? Are you pregnant?' " she said.

According to Duncan, the small number of minorities may simply be a failure to go out and recruit them.

Said Starbuck Junior High Assistant Principal Glenn Kirchner, "Some advisors say, 'I offer the club. You can come to me.' "

But that may not be enough, said Kirchner, chairman of a committee trying to increase minority participation in Racine schools' extracurricular activities. So far, despite efforts to promote those activities, there has been little change, said Kirchner.

To complicate matters, teachers have begun quitting their roles as club advisors in protest over stalled teacher contract negotiations.

All of which means the prospects for boosting participation by black and Hispanic students are not particularly bright.

"It takes a commitment on the part of schools and activities advisors to want to do this," said Kirchner. "I don't think we get that commitment from everyone."

Arm-twisting works well in Shaker Heights

SHAKER HEIGHTS, Ohio — While some educators lament the lack of minority students in after-school clubs, Henry "Doc" Strater and Zachary Green are out twisting arms.

It is no accident that about half the 50 members of their speech and debate team at Shaker Heights High School are black.

Strater and Green recruit them.

"I knew Doc and I knew Zach," said Emily Hooper, 17, explaining why she joined the team. "Doc had mentioned to me in junior high he wanted me to be on the speech team."

Said Strater: "We think this is one thing a lot of black kids miss ... I have something worthwhile to give these kids, and I'm going to see to it they get it," he said.

Blacks account for most of the students making up the school's 42 percent minority population.

"We think this is one thing a lot of black kids miss ... I have something worthwhile to give these kids, and I'm going to see to it they get it."

— Henry Strater
debate coach

Once black students started joining the team, they helped attract others, according to Strater.

"They aren't afraid to walk in and be the only black person there," he said.

"Once we get them to compete, they find they really enjoy doing this and find they can achieve ... The work pays off. You go home with a trophy or with a ribbon and say, 'Look, grandma, I won this.' "

On other teams at this year's state tournament, there were very few other black students, said Hooper, whose specialty is duet acting.

Strater said black students on speech teams were so rare 10 to 15 years ago that judges were often surprised when they saw his team.

"They expected to have a bunch of inarticulate ghetto black kids in front of them," he said. "They didn't get what they were expecting. We won a lot of debates that way."

Despite the success of teachers like Strater and Green, extracurricular clubs at many other schools remain segregated.

Charles Moody, director of the Program for Educational Opportunity at the University of Michigan said activities like choir, orchestra, foreign language clubs, student government, and some sports are predominantly white at many urban schools.

Black students, meanwhile, often can be found on basketball teams and in certain positions on football and track teams, Moody said.

"It's a very pervasive problem," he said. "It sends a message that these things are for this group and not for this group."

In a 1979 newsletter, Moody suggested schools routinely ask these questions:

- **DOES** an activity meet the needs and interests of all students?
- **ARE** steps taken to make all students feel welcome?
- **WHEN** students of different races participate in an activity, is the atmosphere friendly or just tolerant?
- **ARE** membership requirements based on race, religion, or nationality?
- **DO** financial or dress requirements exclude students from low-income families?
- **ARE** leadership positions in clubs taken by students of all racial and cultural groups?

Keeping them in school

Some things just don't work very well here

All in all, he'd rather be home watching TV, says suspended Horlick High School sophomore Keith McKinney.

But McKinney, caught skipping classes, is paying his penalty in "the cube," a small, bleak classroom in a far corner of the school near an old gymnasium.

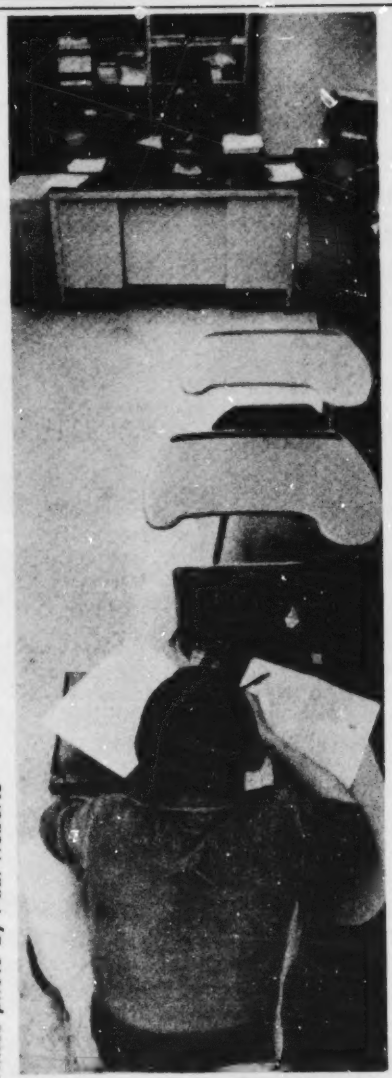
No talking. No walking around. Just seven hours a day of homework.

Even though researchers recommend such in-school suspension rooms as an alternative to kicking students out, Horlick's program is a flop, officials say.

Started last fall, it will end this year.

That is in contrast to programs at Racine's junior high schools, where officials appear to favor keeping suspended students in school.

"It doesn't make much sense if they've been truant for 10 days and you send them home for three more," said Eileen Wortley, a counselor at Jerstad-Agerholm Junior



Journal Times photo by Paul Roberts

"The cube," an in-school suspension room
Horlick says the experiment isn't working

High School, the first Racine school to start an in-school suspension center.

The program focuses on helping students with academic problems. Students must be caught up with homework before leaving Jerstad's in-school suspension room.

Former Jerstad Principal Russell Pollcck, now at Gilmore Junior High, credits the program with curbing failure rates and other problems.

"Smoking in the bathrooms, believe it or not, is gone," he said. "The kids do not want to be isolated from their friends."

In a 1978 report by the National Institute of Education, researcher Junious Williams said kicking students out of school contributes to problems like academic failure,

Suspensions

The trouble all started with American Government class.

"Sometimes I didn't like the class," said 16-year-old Hector Mendoza. "Other times I didn't understand the material."

So Hector skipped.

When officials caught up with him, he got kicked out of Horlick High School for two days. "I didn't like it," he said. "That's two days of zeroes, F's."

Hector's suspension contributed to some unpleasant statistics: blacks and Hispanics — Hector is Puerto Rican — are suspended and expelled from Racine schools in far greater percentages than whites.

Racine is not alone. The problem exists on a national scale, and efforts to correct it have been sporadic at best.

The numbers illustrate the disparity.

Suspensions in Racine's public high schools occurred more than twice as often among blacks and nearly three times as often among Hispanics as they did among whites, according to figures prepared for a 1981-82 survey by the U.S. Office of Civil Rights.

Put another way, the figures showed that Hispanic students accounted for about 5 percent of all Racine high school students, but 11 percent of high school suspensions.

Blacks made up 15 percent of Racine's high school students, but accounted for 28 percent of the suspensions.

Because the same students often were suspended more than once, the number of black and Hispanic suspensions reported in 1981-82 at one school — Horlick — actually was greater than the number of blacks and Hispanics enrolled.

Why the differences?

Educators point to academic frus-

isolation, disrespect, and delinquency.

Because minority students are suspended more frequently, they bear a disproportionate share of such problems, Williams said in the report.

But, said Williams, even with in-school alternatives, schools must ask some questions:

What kinds of infractions will be handled? Does the program help decrease the number of suspensions? Does it deal with the causes of the problems? Does it offer academic help to students who need it?

At Horlick, some officials said the program will end partly because the school won't have enough space next year when ninth-grade classes are added to the high school.

But there is another reason, said Paul Banks, an aide who runs the program.

"It didn't work because there were too many conflicts with some of the teachers," he said.

In many cases, teachers failed to supply homework, leaving students to sit idly, Banks said.

"Some of the teachers say, 'They're not doing the work anyway,'" he said.

hit minority pupils

trations, cultural differences in behavior, inconsistent enforcement of rules, and teacher racism.

A key reason may be that teachers are simply less tolerant of minority students, said Joan McCarty First, executive director of the National Coalition of Advocates for Students, based in Indianapolis.

"It really happens in the classroom," she said. "Teachers, black and white, tend to overreact to their behavior ... Teacher inconsistency is the real culprit more often than racial discrimination."

California State University associate professor Junious Williams, a consultant on school discipline issues, said studies done in Michigan between 1978 and 1980 quizzed teachers about imaginary discipline problems.

When students in the surveys were described as being black, teachers decided more frequently to send them to the office, Williams said.

According to Williams, there are other problems:

• **EVEN WHERE** school districts have clearly written standards, teachers may not know the rules or may apply them unevenly. Said Williams, "In most school districts, the staff can throw the student code of conduct away, and it won't have a major impact."

• **ACADEMIC** frustrations, starting as early as elementary school, often are behind discipline problems, he said.

• **TEACHERS** often make an excessive number of referrals for minor offenses, he said. Other methods should be used to handle problems like being tardy, not having homework, or talking out of turn, he said.

The disproportion, however, may also be traced to cultural differences, according to Leland Johnson, assistant superintendent for pupil personnel in Racine schools.

He said black students, in particular, often are more aggressive and get into fights more frequently.

Although black students make up 19 percent of the school population, they account for 70 percent of the fights that have resulted in suspension from Johnson's office so far this year.

However, while fighting may slightly increase the percentage of minority suspensions, it does not explain the wide discrepancies in numbers.

Even among the most serious suspensions, the ones that are sent to Johnson's office, truancy accounted for more than half the offenses last year, while fights accounted for about 4 percent.

Deputy Superintendent of Schools Drue Guy said the problem begins

in grade school, where some white teachers cannot adjust to black students.

"Black kids ... are active, they move, they touch," said Guy. "If you have a conservative, white, female teacher (and) you have a kid moving, doing two or three things, it drives the teacher to distraction. All of a sudden (the student) is getting referrals."

Some officials, including Guy, have been at odds with Johnson over his proposal to create a separate school for disruptive elementary school students — a school similar to The Academy for junior high and high school students.

"It will be siphoning off every aggressive little black boy," said Guy.

Johnson, however, disputes suggestions of racism.

He said critics are inclined to blame the schools instead of the behavior.

According to Johnson, black students are not only physically more aggressive, but verbally aggressive.

"The teacher does not get compliance as quickly," he said. "In general, they get quicker and more acceptable responses from white kids.

"... We're dealing with the behavior," said Johnson. "We don't make the interpretation on the basis of race."

Researchers like Williams and student advocates like First say school racism is a factor. Among their recommendations:

• **DON'T SUSPEND** for minor offenses. Centennial High School in Champaign, Ill., has sharply reduced overall suspensions by refusing to suspend for truancy. The school also has ruled out teacher referrals for such things as profanity or tardiness, said Principal Al Davis.

The result: the 1,300-student school suspended 92 students last year, compared with 287 in 1977-78, and Davis said the school climate has improved markedly.

• **KNOW THE RULES.** Officials in Stockton, Calif., said schools there also reduced suspensions after taking several steps, including regular teacher training sessions and student classes on a new student conduct code.

• **KEEP GOOD RECORDS.** First said schools should keep better data on disciplinary referrals, including reasons for referrals and which teachers make the most frequent referrals.

Prospects for change are not particularly bright.

Even in places like Stockton and Champaign, where schools were able to reduce overall suspensions, officials say the racial disparity persists.

On a national basis, black students were suspended at nearly twice the rate of whites, while Hispanics were suspended at a slightly higher rate than whites, according to a 1979-80 U.S. Office of Civil Rights survey.

And in Racine, a committee studying racial disparities in discipline has made little progress, said Park High School Principal James Thompson.

Thompson quit as chairman of the committee.

"A lot of discussions were held, and we didn't get far with any of them," he said. "I was very frustrated."

Black

Although about three of every four students in Racine's desegregated schools are white, the numbers in Roosevelt School's Room 108 don't add up:

Six black children, four whites, one Hispanic.

Room 108, one of many Racine classrooms for children categorized as educable mentally handicapped (EMH), illustrates a disparity affecting minority students, particularly black children.

In schools across the nation, black students are placed in special education classes at an unusually high rate. Racine is no exception.

"It's a grave problem," says Unified School District Special Education Supervisor Donna Barootian, chairman of a task force studying the issue.

Educators blame a variety of factors — IQ tests, poverty, cultural differences, linguistic differences, teacher racism — but have had little success in solving the problem. In at least two states, the issue has gone to court.

The numbers are troubling:

• **NEARLY ONE** of every five black children in Racine public schools is categorized as a special education student, compared with roughly one of every nine Hispanic children and one of every 12 white children, according to district figures.

• **EMH** placements, sometimes referred to as educable mentally retarded, account for 3.9 percent of the black students in Racine public

imbalance in Special Ed

schools, 2.1 percent of all Hispanic students, and 0.8 percent of all white students.

• **ON A NATIONAL** scale, the number of educable mentally retarded children in 1980-81 amounted to less than 1 percent of all Hispanic children in public schools, slightly more than 1 percent of all white schoolchildren, but about 4 percent of all black schoolchildren, according to a survey by the U.S. Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

Why the imbalance?

A panel set up to study the issue for OCR listed these factors:

• **TESTS** such as IQ measurements often contain language or cultural biases that are geared toward middle-class students and identify disproportionate numbers of minorities as candidates for special education.

• **FUNDING** schemes that tie special education dollars to enrollment encourage overcounting, particularly among minority children, who are more likely to be eligible.

• **STUDENTS** may suffer from undiagnosed medical or physical problems, emotional disturbances, hyperactivity, anxiety, or lack of skills needed to adapt to school.

• **LACK** of quality instruction for minority students may lead to academic failure and, consequently, more frequent placement in special education.

• **HOME ENVIRONMENTS** may lack encouragement for children to use complex systems of verbal symbols, and this may be related to poorly-developed thinking skills.

• **CULTURAL** conflicts between minority families and schools that are characterized by white, middle-class values and curriculum.

Whatever the reasons, the problem appears to be one more part of a pattern of academic failure for black students — lower achievement, worse grades, more discipline problems, more dropouts.

The inability of schools to deal with those problems may itself contribute to high placement rates of blacks in special education, educators say.

"We don't know why those kids get on a failure trajectory in school," said Alan Coulter, president-elect of the National Association of School Psychologists.

"Unfortunately, the regular classroom's way of coping is to refer those kids and put pressure on special education people to take them in special education," said Coulter, who is with the Louisiana Department of Education.

In Racine, teachers make referrals of minority children at a greater rate than that for whites, said Andrea Lorenz, supervisor of psychological services for the Unified District.

"Consequently, the odds are more will be placed," she said.

However, before a child is placed in special education, he must be assessed by a team of educators who use formal tests, observations, and behavioral assessments.

The disproportionate placement of blacks occurs in some special education categories, but not others.

For blindness, deafness, or severe retardation, the rates of referral for various racial groups appear to be similar. It is in categories such as EMH, learning disabled, and emotionally disturbed — areas that are more difficult to diagnose — that the disproportion occurs.

In those areas, the diagnosis can be a dilemma, says Barootian.

"When you're looking at a child functioning three years below grade level, you can't refute that," she said. "... If we answer, no, the student is not retarded ... then why is he functioning this way? Is it nutrition? Is it lead poisoning? There are so many questions."

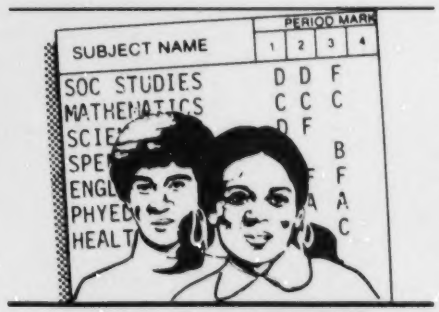
Although the district considers the higher rate of placement of blacks a problem, the numbers have begun to improve, she said.

And, she added, "We're not sending these kids to a dungeon into hell. They have got super teachers, small classes, aides. They are really going into privileged, very expensive services.

"The problem is the (special education) label," she said. " ... It becomes a negative thing."

The problem is compounded, however, if the programs fail to help children return to regular classrooms.

Said Coulter: "There is no evidence special education for mildly handicapped children is any more effective in producing higher achievement scores than if we left



MINORITIES:
Classroom crisis

them in a regular classroom."

Although most schools have been unable to solve the disparity, courts in two states have tried.

California schools have appealed a 1979 federal court decision banning the use of IQ tests as a means of placing mildly retarded children in special education. And a federal judge in 1979 ordered Mississippi schools to reduce disproportionate numbers of minorities in special education classes.

Mississippi officials are awaiting a progress report, but preliminary figures are not promising, said Daniel Yohalem, project director for the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C.

Paul Haubrich, chairman of the Department of Exceptional Education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, said there is a strong correlation between poverty and placement in special education.

"Poverty limits the opportunity to interact with the culture around you," he said. In addition, low-income parents may suffer "... everything from poor prenatal care, poor diet, poor medical care," he said.

"If you do not have proper vitamins, proper diet, you can have profound effects on that child, and those effects are not eradicated by school."

There are many factors, he said.

"You can't say it's race alone," said Haubrich. "You can't say it's poverty alone. You can't say it's cultural tradition alone ... It's a very interactive and dynamic kind of thing. It's a real complex issue."

What can be done?

Haubrich offers these suggestions:

• **USE ALTERNATIVE** tests for minority children in order to eliminate the cultural, middle-class bias built into many tests. Racine schools have used at least one such alternative test and are considering others, said Barootian.

• **INCLUDE** minority members on the teams that determine whether students will be placed in special education programs.

• **CONSIDER** not only a child's school performance, but his ability to adapt to non-school situations in determining whether he should be placed in special education.

• **STUDY** referral rates to determine whether certain schools or certain teachers are making disproportionate numbers of referrals.

• **TRAIN** teachers to develop "... a broader sense of cultural understanding."

• **DEVELOP** alternative methods of instruction that can be used in existing classrooms.

A crucial first step, is to acknowledge the problem, said Haubrich, who is conducting a study of the racial makeup of special education enrollments in Racine, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Beloit, and Madison.

Haubrich gives Racine high marks for its research.

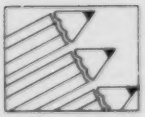
"They have good information," he said. "A lot of districts we go into ... have no idea even how to get it."

Because of the work of researchers here, Racine schools are beginning to move in the right direction, said Barootian.

"Some of the answers we don't know," she said, "but you don't stop trying."

Philippine News
San Francisco, California

Counseling for Filipino Students

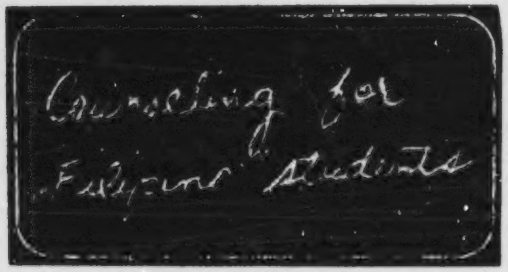
A Four-Part Series  *By Linda Ogawa Ramirez*

Counseling for a bicultural community

SAN FRANCISCO — All of the following statements are true.

Filipino parents, who have a high regard for the value of education, are extremely interested in the academic success of their children. Filipino parents, many of whom maintain a two-income household, leave their children to the educational system and respond, "Bahala" (come what may).

Filipino students are polite, respectful of their elders and perform well in school. Filipino students are increasingly becoming involved in violent activity, truancy and are lacking in the basic skills taught in the classroom.



In the past, studies on a local, state and national levels that dealt with the educational attainments of Asian students placed them high on the achievement scale. Filipinos, included with that Asian grouping, have ridden on that success wave and, along with their Chinese, Japanese and Korean counterparts, are viewed as model students.

While acknowledging that they do have "excellent" students, Filipino counselors in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) also recognize another group of students who receive little attention.

"For about 10 years, the Filipinos who came in had some formal education, some English skills and could really acculturate quickly. Parents prepared their children on what to expect here," said Ligaya Avenida, program coordinator for the SFUSD Filipino bilingual program.

"But lately, children coming in display different characteristics. Maybe it's the flow of immigration."

The district has tried to address the specific needs of immigrant children with its Filipino Education Center for kindergarten through fifth grade students, the Intake Center to evaluate students new to the district and the Newcomers High School, geared specifically for the limited skilled or pre-literate student.

But those who are not placed in the special schools or the programs are being thrown into a school system and culture that can hardly address or identify their special needs and problems.

In the district's eight high schools were there are more than 1,700 Filipino students, only two head counselors are Filipino, and they are the district's only two full time Filipino counselors.

Faye Santos Vickroy has been the head counselor at Woodrow Wilson High School for a little over a year. She counsels the ninth and 10th grade students in a school with more than 250 Filipinos. Ray Cordoba was the first Filipino head counselor in the district three years ago. Balboa High School where he works has 521 Filipinos. Cordoba is helped with his job by Angel Martinez, an English-as-a-Second-Language resource teacher and part time counselor.

The counselors described the multi-tiered problems their students are facing. In school, they are driven by cultural values that cause conflicts bet-

About the Author

LINDA OGAWA RAMIREZ is the associate editor and community staff reporter for the *Philippine News*, a national weekly publication based in South San Francisco. Born in California but raised in Texas, Ramirez returned to the West Coast in 1977 after graduating from the University of Texas at Austin with a Bachelor of Journalism degree.

Ramirez began work in San Francisco as the assistant to the editor and reporter of a Japanese-English daily, the *Hokubei Mainichi*.

In discussions with community educators and parents, Ramirez found a growing concern for students facing cultural and academic problems in a school system generally overcrowded and understaffed. These were not the "model students" usually described in news reports about the success of Asian immigrants.

Her series on counseling services for Filipino high school students attempts to put into perspective the barriers faced by students, parents and school administrators in identifying and addressing problems and concerns of a growing community.

ween themselves and their teachers, with other Filipinos born and raised in a different culture and with their own groups as they seek an identity and acceptance from their peers.

The educational system in the Philippines is more rigid than that in the U.S. Filipino students who have attended Philippine schools or the U.S.-raised Filipino child who has parents raised in that environment is faced with a contrasting situation in an American program that stresses more freedom and independence for the students.

"The Filipino child withdraws and does not participate," Avenida said. "He becomes quiet."

But even without the culture shock of a more liberal school environment, Filipino children are taught to "listen to your teacher."

Corazon Ponce and Dr. Lydia R. Castillo compiled a list of Filipino cultural values for the school district in 1972. Filipino students in the classroom will speak only when spoken to and will not ask questions, they said.

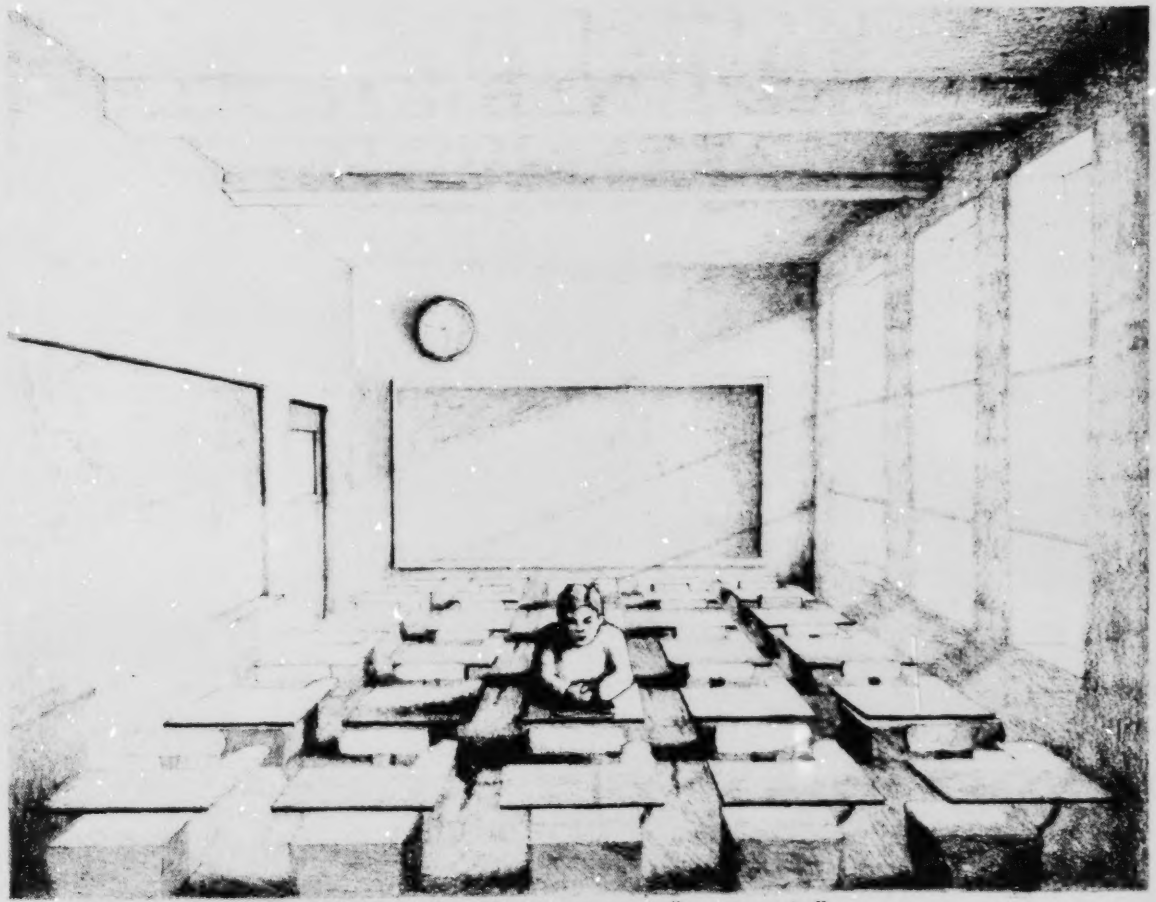
Martinez noted that in a college prepatory class that he teaches at Balboa High School, "The Filipino students wait for the teacher to tell them what to do. They have to be guided. They need motivation."

"They need guidance from someone somewhere," said Cordoba. "Unless you guide them from middle school on, you're going to lose them."

A master's thesis prepared by Tania Fortunata Marino Azores for the University of California, Los Angeles, includes data showing that one-third of Filipinos in the 12th grade failed to graduate.

Another problem facing the schools is that which deals with gangs. Vickroy, whose schools has received attention in the past for alleged racial tensions, said the problem seems to have decreased somewhat. "Now," she said, "they seem to be more for peer support."

Filipinos have a need to congregate with one another for acceptance. This "pakikisama" emphasizes smooth interpersonal relationships, cooperation and a desire to "get along" at all costs.



It is not surprising, then, to Filipinos who work with youth, to see them exhibit daring tendencies to cut class and engage in fights to protect one's self esteem or "amor propio."

Then, there is the additional conflict between what Cordoba describes as the "basement Filipinos," those who were born and/or raised in the U.S., and the "second-floor" Filipinos, also known as the "FOBs," (fresh off the boat).

Language plays a big part in the separation between the two groups. The American Filipino dislikes the Philippine-born Filipino because of the accent that accompanies his use of English. The immigrant, on the other hand, does not consider the U.S. Filipino as a "true Filipino" because he cannot speak Tagalog. Sometimes, too, the ability of one group to speak English fluently, or with no accent, causes jealousy in the other group.

in either case, counselors said either group can characterize the other as "snobs."

But the problems Filipino students face are not limited to in-school conflicts but also extend to the home.

"The missing link," said Avenida," is how to help ents deal with the problems of their child."

"One of the basic problems is communication between the Filipino kids and their parents. One of the most common things we hear is 'They just don't understand,' " Cordoba said.

Filipino families have more of a cultural gap between adult and child than a generation gap. Parents used to strict discipline in their homes in the Philippines, are unaccustomed to their children's newfound independence nurtured by the schools. Their difficulties are compounded by the fact that both parents work, motivated by the immigrants' dream of "making it" in America.

The discipline dished out by parents when they discover their children have failed in one way or another can be swift and severe. Corporal punishment, common in the Philippines and in most Asian countries, is less than favorably accepted in the U.S.

Parent education is as crucial a task as education for educators and school administrators.

"Parents have to know what is allowed in the Philippines and what is allowed here," said Ponce. "Children's rights are guaranteed by law here. There are no laws in the Philippines. There are protective services but they're not as enforced as here."

The children, too, "don't know why their parents act in certain ways," Martinez added.

Because of the parents' inability to deal with their children in a different cultural environment and, in some cases, their unfamiliarity with the education system, Martinez and Cordoba said they are witnessing an increase in Filipino runaways, truancy and pregnancies.

"It takes the total involvement of parents, community and the schools" to help the students, Cordoba said.

"We can't do it alone."

A day in the life of a counselor

SAN FRANCISCO — It's 8:45 a.m. and Ray Cordoba already has spent an hour in a faculty meeting and must now face two students who began the school day with a fight.

Cordoba is the head counselor at Balboa High School where the more than 2,000-student population is 25 percent Filipino. He's been at his job for three years and is still able, surprisingly, to maintain a calm, controlled persona.

The two boys, a 17-year-old Filipino who nervously bounces his knee during the entire 25-minute session and a 15-year-old black youth seldom face each other while Cordoba asks them about their scuffle.

They have never been brought in before him, Cordoba said, adding that it is the habitual unruly students who is referred as the last recourse to room 112. Even so, school policy dictates that both boys be suspended fore the day. A fight is a fight, no matter who threw the first punch.

Cordoba added that both parties are sent home to prevent retaliatory actions byfriends on either side against the student who is allowed to stay in school.

The Filipino has no one at home to report to, he said, but he is sent off anyway promising to call Cordoba later. The other youth's mother, contacted by the counselor, makes an appointment to come in the same day for a conference. Her son waits.

The pair leave Cordoba's office only to be replaced by another student, this time a female referred to Cordoba by a Filipina teacher for disrespectful behavior and class disruption.

She denies any allegation and tells Cordoba there is a personality conflict between her and the teacher.

She talks loudly and angrily yet not disrespectfully to her counselor. Cordoba encourages her to remain silent in class to maintain the peace with her teacher and promises to talk to the instructor. He also extends an invitation to his office whenever the pressure gets

too much and the student needs a place in which to "explode."

In the first hour of what turns out to be a "fairly quiet day" in the life of an inner city high school counselor, Cordoba has seen two students involved in a dispute, acted as mediator between student and teacher, made an appointment for a parent conference and tried to make a dent in the piles of students' attendance records, academic reports, teacher referrals and routine correspondence that carpet his desk.

It is now 9:15 a.m. and in 10 minutes, the bell sounds ending the first period of classes and Cordoba leaves his office to patrol the campus.

The day is sunny and warm, two days after the students have come back from the Easter break. Perhaps this is why, Cordoba guessed, tensions are somewhat mild.

What Cordoba has experienced in that first hour is not unlike what many counselors, very few of them Filipino, face each day. With the ratio of students to counselors reaching in the hundreds to one, the job becomes more than a 40-hour-per-week cycle.

A large part of the day is spent shuffling papers that monitor a student's progress in school. Each time Cordoba sees a student, a record is pulled. Referrals must be completed with the results of the meeting and a copy is forwarded to the teachers. Academic records are checked and home emergency cards are pulled as they are needed. Fortunately, the mounds of paperwork needed to keep track of the students on detention or suspended from school are handled by a new assistant, Ray Guiuan.

In betwee, the student or parent or teache: appointments, Cordoba must contend with constant interruptions as students knock on his door and ask, "Mr. Cordoba, can I talk to you for a minute?" If they don't come by his office, they stop him in the hallways.

Emergencies also crop up from time to time. A student who has lost a wallet goes to Cordoba to ask his intervention with who he thinks are the culprits. A few days later, the wallet is recovered with its contents intact. Nine out of 10 times, Cordoba said, the wallet is never recovered. And still days later, stolen gym equipment is recovered at an in-school investigation.

Special favors are asked. A student walks in at the end of the day asking for the letter of intent to graduate that Cordoba promised. Cordoba forgot, but sits down immediately and writes the letter for the student entering the Air Force.

The fight between the two youths is common in the ethnically diverse school. The black youth, unwilling to talk, tells Cordoba that the Filipino was talking about his and has circulated stories of them fighting. But, he admits the conversation he overheard was in Tagalog.

"This happens a lot when there's a difference in communication," Cordoba tells the parent later. "The kids don't understand what's being said and they think the Filipinos are talking about them."

Surprisingly, interracial conflicts are not as frequent as intra-racial ones, Cordoba said, and the communication gap is especially noticeable among Filipinos from different provinces in the Philippines or between the Philippine and American born Filipinos.

This void in discipline and supervision on the home front is making it necessary for the schools to take up the slack. If both parents work, as is becoming more and more the case, it is not unusual for them to leave the house before their child goes to school or come home after the child has been dismissed from classes. It is not uncommon, therefore, for parents to be unaware of their child's attendance record and makes it more difficult to have them realize a problem exists or have them cooperate in the counseling effort.

BALBOA HIGH SCHOOL counselor Ray Cordoba talks to parents, school administrators, teachers and other district counselors on the phone if he cannot see them personally as part of his hectic daily schedule. After school, he attends weekly meetings of the Filipino Octagon Club. Somewhere in his busy schedule he finds time to counsel students not only on their school plans but with their personal problems also. Busy and dedicated Filipino counselors like Cordoba face the problem of overstretching themselves.

Those parents Cordoba cannot see during the day, because of conflicting schedules, or during the three-hour Monday night counseling sessions, he tries to see at other times during the week after regular working hours.

"The parents know you're concerned if you make an attempt to go to their home; that you care about the kid. It also lets me see the home front, what it's really like."

Over the past three years, Filipino parents and their children at Balboa have gone to Cordoba with their problems. Sometimes, it has reached a crisis stage with parents pleading with him to help them manage their children. He has been there, speaking in English or Tagalog, when their teenage daughters and sons become parents or when they run away from home.

Filipina teenagers now are becoming pregnant as frequently as any other women in any other culture despite their more strict Catholic upbringing. Nine out of 10 of them, Cordoba said, are choosing to have their babies.

While Cordoba tries to convince the family that he will intervene with the other student, he finds out that the black family has been the victim of harassment by what they believe are Filipino students at Balboa. With this newfound information, Cordoba finds the conflict is an old one.

"I can't do anything if I don't know what's going on," he said.

Attempts to reach the Filipino youth at home fail. Of the two telephone numbers he has on the boy, one is out of service and the other is a wrong number.

"It's a big problem at school," Cordoba said. "Emergency cards are not filled out right or there's no telephone at home." Many times, telephones are disconnected or there is no one home to supervise the students since both parents work.

IT BECOMES necessary at times for the school to send mailgrams to the home to contact the parent or a supervising adult.

Balboa High School also has a large number of Filipino teachers, many of them with experience from the Philippines and many of them from an older generation.

"It's becoming more of a problem," Cordoba said, "especially with the cultural problems. Filipino teachers can't stand 'loud' students. They're used to

strict discipline nd respect."

But it's not only Filipino teachers who are unable or unwilling to discipline their classroom. Each teacher has a personal "assertive discipline" plan where violations of classroom decorum are punishable by detention, parent notification, extra classwork or referral to the head counselor. Some teachers give their students as many as five chances before they are sent to Cordoba's office. Other take no more than two violations.

An independent consultant hired by the school is conducting a survey and has found so far that in a period of four to five months, 1,600 referrals were made to Cordoba by only a small percentage of the teaching faculty.

"It's the same teachers with the problem students," Cordoba said, "and a lot of it is petty problems."

More serious problems, too, are left unattended. Cordoba hoped to deal with five student referrals in one swoop by meeting with the teacher who sent them to him. The teacher never arrived for the appointment

'A lot of them

and left to message with Cordoba of any change in schedule.

Cordoba has an advantage over most teachers, and even some of the other counselors, in that he is able to call by name many of the students who knock on his door throughout the day or stop him in the hallways or on the schoolgrounds as he makes his regular in-between-period patrols.

"It's definitely an advantage," he said. "It's best if you can earn the respect of the students."

The students are more likely to move on to class if the administrator is someone they know. The familiarity also helps when an "outsider" wanders on campus to visit old friends.

The regular patrols of the grounds has decreased many of the problems at Balboa. "Weed Alley," a short walk way leading to a stairwell in the building, is empty and unclogged now and gone is the thick smoke and smell of marijuana joints. The regular patrols help cut down on visits by local dope dealers who find easy access to customers on the open campus.

The lunch period can present problems since the students have a longer time to roam on and off campus and the appearance of outsiders becomes greater. But with a student population of more than 2,000 and coinciding understaffing, the potential for a large scale incident exists throughout the day.

It's not unusual for fights to break out. "It takes only one," Cordoba said to cause a major riot. The fights and scuffles are made all the more dangerous because of the presence of weapons.

"About two years ago, I chased this small Filipino kid," Cordoba remembered. "He was in a fight and I guess back them I was gung-ho to catch him. It wasn't until I brought him back into my office that I found he had a gun, loaded and ready to go."

If there are Filipinos, particularly immigrants, involved, there are sure to be weapons. Filipino Americans are more into the martial arts style of fighting.

ONE FILIPINO who comes into the office to talk in Tagalog has his jacket searched before the conversation with Cordoba begins. School officials have "just cause" to conduct such searches, Cordoba said, especially of the "black leather" people.

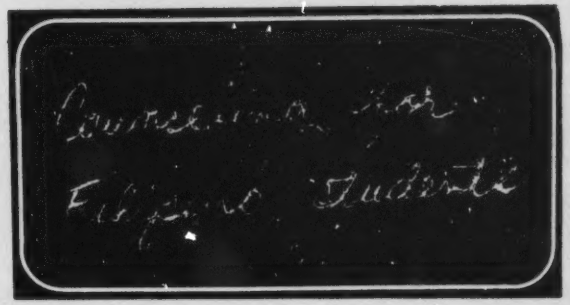
It is these same "black leather" types, however, who speak to Cordoba as he walks through the second floor of the school during his lunchtime patrol. These "second floor Filipinos," so named because that's where they congregate, are immigrants who extend greetings to the counselor in Tagalog.

Cordoba and the Octagon Club that he supports in school is using sports to bridge the gap between the second floor Filipinos and the Filipino Ameericans, the basement Filipinos, again, named after their locale. The Octagon Club is a program of the Yerba Buena Optimist Club, a Filipino chapter of the Optimists, of which Cordoba is a recent member.

During a free period, officers of the youth club meet with Cordoba to plan the agenda for an after school meeting. The club makes preparations for an upcoming basketball tournament and dance, the Cinco de Mayo carnical in school and the end-of-school picnic. The meeting is hectice, with jokes, laughter and conversation filtering in and ut of the business items. But Cordoba said when the time comes for each event, each member assigned specific tasks on the various committees always comes through.

Like any other high school, Balboa has its share of problems and successes. The specific needs of the increasing Filipino population, however, are becoming more severe while the importance of adequate counseling services is less emphasized. Of course, not all students are problem students. Balboa's last two student body presidents have been Filipino.

"We're trying to do the best (for our students) with what we have," Cordoba said, "although what we have may not be the best."



don't have a feeling of belonging'

SAN FRANCISCO — The first minor to be tried as an adult under a major crimes law was 17-year-old Julius Domantay, a habitual truant since the age of 14 from his San Francisco High School.

"Truancy and violence go hand-in-hand," said Rosadia Escueta, warning that the truancy problem among Filipino students "is almost like an epidemic."

Escueta has been a probation officer for 10 years and works at the Youth Guidance Center, where students in trouble with the law and with the schools report to probation officers like her or appear before a Juvenile Court judge.

Truancy is a statutory offense, a fact that makes Escueta say, "By the time they get to me, they've committed some kind of crime. By the time I get to them, they've been truant a long time."

The truancy problem has been going on a long time but has become magnified because the largeness of the Filipino population allows its students to "get lost within each other. Kids group together and can hide each other," Escueta said.

"Most often, they 'cut' as a group," as many as eight at a time, said Salud Mallare, a student adviser at one of the four San Francisco Unified School District's counseling centers.

Less than two years ago, the school district implemented Project Stay-At-School designed to reduce truancy and excessive absenteeism. The project is sponsored by the district, the Mayor's Office, the Police Department, the Probation Department, the Juvenile Court and the Department of Social Services.

Students who are stopped by officers of the School Patrol Unit of the police department are taken to a counseling center if they cannot provide any valid reason for being out of school. The students are taken to any one of the counseling centers and the parents are notified immediately. They go either to the center or the school.

Counselors at the center do not send the students to the Youth Guidance Center, said Bob Figone, coordinator for the project, "they send themselves there."

The Project does have a Student Attendance Review Board made up of community and district people. As a last resort, they can file a truancy petition for non-attendance. But before the petition is filed, all possible means are taken to resolve the problem.

Mallare works at the John McLaren Counseling Center on Sunnydale Avenue and sees the highest number of Filipinos there because Balboa and Woodrow Wilson high schools are its "feeder schools." Balboa and Wilson have the highest number of Filipino students in the district.

They come in third in the number of truancies reported to her, Mallare said.

Mallare and Escueta gave similar reasons for Filipino truancy, citing primarily cultural differences between the U.S. and the Philippines' way of life.

"Most have a hard time adjusting," Mallare said. In the Philippines, students are accustomed to structured, disciplined school regimen unlike what they find in American with a choice of subjects, electives and freedom to adjust.

Family life changes, too, as both parents leave the home to work. The concept of a broken home is new to many Filipino youth who once lived in a country where divorce is illegal.

'Nothing engages them in school," Escueta said. "We've got to get them interested in their environment. A lot of them don't have a feeling of belonging."

Usually, it is not until the parents are notified by the school or a probation officer do they realize that their child has been missing school regularly and subsequently failing in many of the courses.

"IT'S NOT that they can't do the work, it's just they're not doing it," said Faye Santos Vickroy, head counselor at Woodrow Wilson High School.

In her year at Wilson, Vickroy said she has seen Filipinos who have failed courses and remain stuck in the lower grades quit school when they reach 18. "I have some who are nearing 18 and they're still in the ninth grade."

Balboa High School, too, maintains a "D, F and I (Incomplete)" list with some 70 to 75 Filipino names. That is a small percentage of the total number, but Ray Cordoba, head counselor, said there may be as many as 40 of those Filipinos on the list who are failing four or more courses.

Once parents are aware of their child's attendance problems and adjacent academic problems, they are very concerned because of the high value of education that is inherent in their culture. Their concern and alarm, however, are not matched by their children.

Escueta said she worked with one Filipino youth who had been transferred from Mission High School to Balboa but continued to cut classes in order to visit his friends at his former high school. He would instigate fights there and be consistently caught. Escueta's check into his academic background showed that in three years of high school, the youth had earned only six credits.

"He had been truant for a year," Escueta said, "but his parents were hardworking." At first, the parents found it hard to believe their son could be doing so badly in school. "Everything was a denial." But once they

ESCUETA

realized the magnitude of the problem, the "parents want you to remedy everything that has gone wrong. Parents want someone in authority to come in with a magic wand," Escueta said.

School counselors, who must deal with hundreds of students, cannot conduct the intensive, one-on-one counseling that is needed to reach both students and parents caught in these dilemn a. The counseling centers, too, cannot provide the follow-up and consistent care that is sometimes desperately needed by families.

Mallare admits to using her own personal time to contact parents and sometimes has them meet with her in her own home to talk about their children.

"The problem is that there is no specific organization to refer the kids," said Figone. Figone, who said his own mother does not speak English, recognizes the need for counseling services and counselors that are of the same ethnic background as the family.

Mallare, Vickroy and Escueta cited the need for some kind of comprehensive counseling service or center similar to that for other communities. Figone said the Spanish-speaking community, and even the Samoan community, has counseling services available to its families.

Home and school must work together in meeting the problems, said Vickroy. Counseling for students who cannot graduate but may be eligible for the GED equivalent is sorely needed. Vickroy said she has no place to send her older students for that kind of counseling. When she does refer them, they usually return to her with complaints that they do not feel comfortable, especially if they are sent to a center which is dominated by another ethnic group. Career and college counseling is a priority for Mallare who sees students who are unaware of the opportunities which could lie ahead for them.

"Basically, it's the same people experiencing truancy problems," said Cordoba. "The counseling there (at the centers) is not enough to solve the problems. The kids are sent back to school, placed in detention and their parents are called. They're at it again, later.

"We need a lot more intensive counseling and follow-up."

Statistics have not been released yet to reveal the extent of the truancy and academic problem Filipino families, but Escueta's decade of observance has noted larger and larger numbers of Filipino youth entering the doors at the Youth Guidance Center.

The community

SAN FRANCISCO — With parents usually too busy with their professions to help and schools culturally insensitive to understand, Filipino youth in San Francisco high schools have another alternative—the community.

But youth advocates and workers in the community agree that the support is not there or, at best, is limited.

The community as a whole does not address the issue," said Jennifer Ereno, one of two coordinators of the West Bay Pilipino Multi-Services Corporation in—school work experience program a 10-hour-a-week job training program. "People need to reassess what is happening and question why we don't have the same programs as other communities."

West Bay is the only community organization that advocates for youth and youth issues on a full-time basis. The organization grew in 1977 from goals and principles set forth by the Filipino Youth Coordinating Committee, Inc., formed three years earlier to

combine services offered by the Filipino Youth Organization-Bayanihan, Filipino Organizing Group and the Filipino Adult-Youth Catholic Organization (FAYCO). Its supporters say that it is consistently the most underfunded Asian youth agency in the city.

By contrast, the Chinatown Youth Center in existence for 13 years offers programs in intervention and counseling for youth and has had "continuous community support." Last fiscal year, the center said it served more than 1,800 youths.

West Bay, on the other hand, is able to serve 52 youths in its in-school program. Twenty-one of them are Filipino.

The Japanese Community Youth Council has been in existence for more than 10 years. The Spanish-speaking community has several youth agencies and programs and other ethnic communities, including the Samoan and Vietnamese, are beginning to offer those same kinds of youth programs.

West Bay has been rejected for United Way funding five times, said Dan Mabalatan of West Bay, because there is no community support of the program.

United Way funds are gathered from public and private institutions and from community individuals. It has a program where contributors can earmark donations for specific non-profit services.

Besides being underfunded, West Bay is understaffed with each worker "wearing two to three different hats" as service provider, grants writer and advocate.

"The problem is that there is a core group of people doing all the work — getting the funding, putting programs together and contacting people. It should be a mutual effort with the community," Mabalatan said.

"The community needs to recognize the need," Ereno said, "we can't lecture them about it."

Ereno and Mabalatan said the outreach necessary to educate community organizations and individuals cannot be done by West Bay because the resources, both physical and monetary are extremely limited.

"Everyone has its own agenda," said Ramon Calabaquid of Asian American Community for Education (AACE). Calabaquid said when he was part of FYCC, truancy was already a growing problem at Mission High School. Today, he said the problem is still there and has been compounded by the influx of Philippine immigrants.

AACE is a "talent search" program to promote post secondary education to youth or keep them in high school. It also offers workshops and counseling. But Calabaquid admits that the Filipino community, while availing itself of programs available, must answer the question "What is the problem?" Otherwise, he said, the services will provide only "band-aid solutions."

THE FRUSTRATION that veteran youth advocates feel is being felt by another group of Filipinos, younger and less experienced in community work.

Rod Santos of San Francisco State University is an instructor and coordinator of the Learning Bridge Project. In its first year, the program enrolled 28 Filipinos to work on a one-to-one basis with students at Balboa High School's re-entry program. The SFSU students also to work with "gifted students classrooms at the school.

The university students are required to keep a detailed log chronicling their activities with the students, faculty and family.

The re-entry portion of the project came after Balboa High School principal Shirley Thornton and head counselor Ray Cordoba requested Santos' help. "There is a definite community base (to the program) because the community called out for assistance," Santos said.

The "sense of community" that the project tries to instill in its students is intentional. Santos explained that the School of Ethnic Studies was organized by ethnic people in the community and it is the role of the school and himself as an instructor to impose that philosophical base on the students.

The project also serves an academic purpose since it fulfills a General Education requirement in Behavioral Social Sciences.

"It disturbs me to see people go through our school without that sensitivity," Santos said. His students "will know more about the problems of our youth in this city of ours than they knew before."

Before students began work in the course, Santos said he told them "every horror story possible" to scare them out of the class. Not one, he said, of the original enrollment dropped his course.

At left, Learning Bridge student Valerie Ann Perez (left) of SFSU, tutors Jean Tacdol of Balboa High School.

The SFSU students who talked freely of their experience with the re-entry Filipinos said for the most part that they were unprepared despite Santos' warning of what they found.

"I wasn't expecting students to be that bright and intelligent and still have problems in school," said Santos. His experience, he said, has been an "eye opener."

Other students expressed similar sentiments saying they discovered "proof of our own thinking about the community" and frustration at the help available to the youth.

MORE THAN one said the parents' involvement with their children was inadequate because they were "too busy" or "apathetic" and unbelieving about what is happening in the school environment.

"The parents are too busy," said Lozano, "The students are not given guidance after school."

The students have become, by choice, personally and emotionally involved with their students, tutoring them, counseling them and in some cases meeting and working with their families. They consider themselves the only source of help for some of the Filipino youth.

"No one is out there to help these kids," said one student.

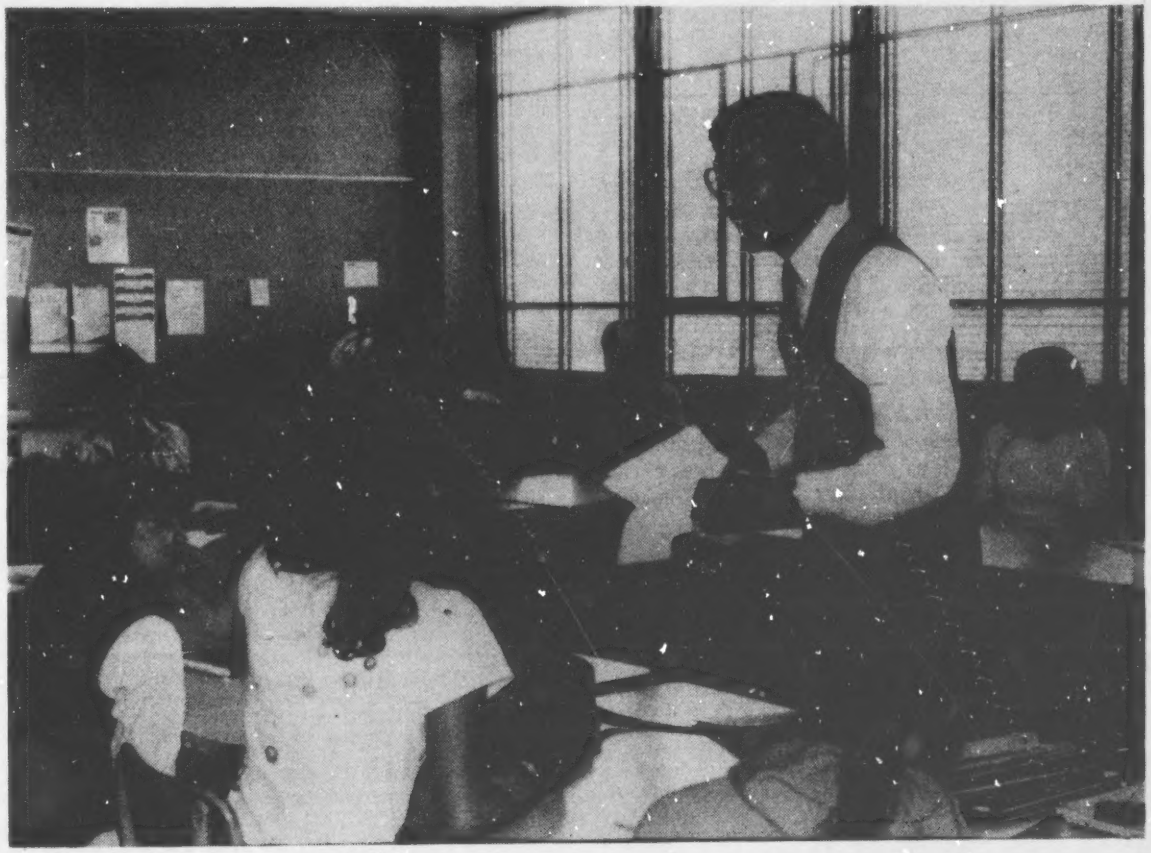
"Many of them don't have anyone to talk to," said one student who described the Learning Project as similar to a Big Brother or Big Sister program.

"My feelings fluctuate," said Wilma. "One minute I get a feeling of accomplishment, that I'm 'Miss Know-It-All.' Other times, I'm just winding my hair.

"But there's always someone in your life that you can reflect on. We may not be that so much now, but maybe later in their lives they'll remember us."

Rizal said he did not accomplish much grade-wise with his student, but made parents realize that their son had a sexual identity problem. "At first, his mother denied everything," he said. "Later, she admitted it and insisted on my help."

Carol said she was able to convince her student, an 18-year-old who was still a sophomore, to stay in school. "We give students a view of an alternative," she said. "we touch someone inside. Sometimes, that's what's missing in their lives."



ROD SANTOS, San Francisco State University instructor, above, meets weekly with Learning Bridge students and provides one day for an informal "rap session" for participants to compare notes and air frustrations.

Statesman Journal
Salem, Oregon

Southeast Asian Refugees in Schools

A Four-Part Series *By John C. Furey*

Hope dwells in U.S. classrooms

Two teen-aged girls approached a world map in Waldo Middle School's Newcomer Center.

Unable to speak each other's language, one pointed to her homeland in Vietnam. The other moved her finger across a sea of blue space and pointed to Central America.

They smiled at each other, as if to say, "Now I know something about you."

But it would be some time before the two Waldo students would share a common language.

They were part of a class for Southeast Asian refugee students and others with little or no English-speaking skills.

Language barriers are at the heart of the continuing survival story of the 625,000 Southeast Asian refugees who have come to the United States since 1975.

Their stories unfold daily inside the American classroom:

• In a poorly lit hallway in San Diego's Euclid Elementary School, some H'mong children from the hills of northern Laos are taught in their native tongue.

Overcrowding, due largely to a recent influx of Southeast Asian students, has forced Euclid educators to hold several classes for the school's 1,025 students in the library, auditorium and hallways.

• Tam Bui, a 15-year-old freshman at Portland's Madison High School, talks about becoming an engineer.

An honor student, the Vietnamese boy has walked with a limp since he was 2 years old. He lives with a brother and sister.

He is not sure he will ever see his parents again. "It will cost a lot of money" for them to leave their country, he said.

• Pat Flynn, a teacher at Seattle's Sharples Orientation Center, said he was pleasantly surprised by the way his new Southeast Asian refugee students have treated him. He said he had grown accustomed to poor student attitudes in American schools.

"Don't tell anybody," Flynn said, "but I have the best job in the district."

Overcrowded schools. Uncertain futures. A growing awareness of a seldom-understood people.

The classroom scenes suggest both a glimmer of hope and long struggles ahead for the refugees.

Their path has taken them through crowded boats at sea, steamy jungles, physical torture and political repression.

Now many refugees believe their fate is directly related to how well they do in schools. It is their way of surviving in a country which has increasingly turned its attention to economic woes.

"It takes time for us," said Hung Nguyen, a Vietnamese counselor and instructor at Chemeketa Community College in Salem. "We don't ask for more, just for enough to prepare ourselves."

Nguyen adds, "The main thing we want is education."

The refugees' emphasis on education is based both on culture and economics.

Culturally, education is viewed as a pride of the family in Southeast Asian countries.

"If a student fails in school, he brings shame to the whole family," according to Thanh Hai Vominh, a program director for the Southeast Asian Refugee Federation in Portland.

"The individual's first loyalty and obligation are to his family, then to the nation and religion," he said.

About the Author

JOHN C. FUREY has been a staff reporter for the *Statesman-Journal* newspaper since 1974, after working for two years for a weekly newspaper in Oregon.

A 1972 Oregon State University graduate, Furey earned a bachelor's degree in Mathematics. He started his journalism career as a photographer, then worked for several years as a sports reporter. He switched to news reporting in 1978, and has since covered police, courts and education news.

Furey's research focused on the education programs for Southeast Asian refugees in the United States. He concentrated his studies on the west coast, where the majority of refugees have settled since first coming here in 1975. In his studies, he explored many new programs being developed for refugees on a district-wide basis. Furey found that programs are helping the refugees' cause, but much still needs to be done to help the newcomers overcome their cultural, economic and educational problems.

But refugees also understand the relationship of education to their economic livelihood.

Last year, the length of time refugees could receive federal financial assistance under the Refugee Act of 1980 was reduced from 36 to 18 months. In Oregon, cash and medical benefits were eliminated for about 6,200 of the state's 17,500 refugees.

Unemployment rates for refugees in Oregon continue to hover around 50 percent. And many refugees still rely on low-pay and summer agricultural work.

Heads of refugee households are discouraged from going to American universities to improve their situations because they must devote time and energy to supporting a family.

Economics has forced many families to move to lower-priced housing or flee the state in search of better welfare benefits.

In Portland public schools last year, about half of the refugee students left the system, according to John Withers, head of the bilingual department.

However, another wave of refugees, most of whom moved from other states, kept the refugee student population in Portland at the same level this year.

Clearly, the refugees' long-range future rests with the success of elementary and secondary students. Their short-range future lies with language and job-training programs geared for household heads and other adults.

In addressing younger refugees' needs, educators are struggling to keep up with the changing face of their schools. The changes are particularly sharp on the West Coast.

In California, nearly one of every five school children speaks little or no English. And the trend is growing.

One half of the children in San Francisco schools come from homes where a dialect of Chinese, Vietnamese or Spanish is spoken.

High percentages of non-English speaking students are concentrated in the cities of Los Angeles (23 percent), Long Beach (26.6 percent) and San Diego (19.7 percent).

Ten years ago, there were no Vietnamese in the San Francisco School District. Now Vietnamese students make up 8 to 9 percent of the school population.

In Washington, the Asian population has more than tripled in the last 12 years. The state's 131,000 Asians have become its second largest racial group, after whites.

In Oregon, the influx of refugees has increased 472 percent during the last five years.

Oregon currently has about 17,500 refugees — the ninth largest Southeast Asian population in the United States. It also is the third state per capita for refugees from Southeast Asia.

Enrollment figures for fall 1982 showed that 503 of about 22,000 students in the Salem School District were from Southeast Asia, and new refugees continue to come into the community.

These dramatic changes have forced educators to tackle the issue of teaching English as a second language.

Also forcing the issue is a 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision stating students who have little or no English have a right to special language services.

The case of Lau vs. Nichols involved about 3,000 Chinese-speaking students in San Francisco schools. In the decision, Justice William O. Douglas wrote:

"There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum, for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education."

Debate since then has centered on what method to use in providing limited-English speaking students with the best education.

But in the case of the refugees, educators often have thrown their old programs out the window and started over.

They did so out of necessity. They were starting with virtually no textbooks and with few teachers who could speak the refugee students' language.

Today, school districts like Seattle and San Diego are developing their own curriculum materials in Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian. But lack of textbook materials still is a problem.

Some districts have begun training Southeast Asians to teach in this country. Others are developing new programs aimed at the general population of students training to be teachers.

At Western Oregon State College in Monmouth, a program was recently developed to provide cultural awareness to all students studying to be teachers.

Refugees in school

The training is geared to preventing teachers from allowing "a kid to just sit by the window," according to Beatriz Andrews, bilingual education coordinator at WOSC.

Andrews, who headed the Salem School District's bilingual department last year, said the state does not require students to pass a cultural awareness class before becoming certified. However, she believes the state should make such a requirement.

"It seems we're out of step," Andrews said. "Education, like the economy, should be going global.

The motivation behind new refugee programs should go beyond providing equal educational opportunity, Andrews said.

"Education's job is to be humane," she says. "We're not here to make a buck."

'A death that will remain with me'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanh Trang, now a seventh-grader at Salem's Leslie Middle School, fled Vietnam with his family in 1979. He endured a harrowing ordeal in a small boat on the South China Sea before reaching safety in Malaysia. Here is his story, in his own words:

After 1975, the Communists had taken over Vietnam. Because they were cruel, they took all our property and forced everyone to work with not enough food to eat. For that reason, many people decided to escape from Vietnam on a small boat with many miserable days on the sea.

On November 9, 1979, my family decided to leave home on a 23—foot long and 12—foot—wide boat. There were 300 people, consisting of 125 men, 150 women and 75 children. At 1 p.m., everybody had been seated by the captain. (Then) our small boat was spotted by the sea patrol (and) shot at ... Unfortunately, we escaped with six injured.

At 6 p.m., we met a terrible storm. The seawater smashed into our boat and we were wet, cold and hungry. The children were crying for food and drink and everybody began to throw up.

On Nov. 12, the engine had stopped working and all the foods and sweet water were gone. We were hopeless, living on the edge of death. We were understanding how valuable freedom was. Day after day, night after night, the small boat drifted around the sea. We had given signals for help to ships from Poland, (the) USSR and Cuba, but they didn't stop.

On Nov. 16, the small boat drifted to Indonesia. (The authorities) gave us many foods and sweet water. They also fixed our engine and gave us 100 gallons of gas. The captain of that island said they would welcome us to stay with them, but they had run out of space for refugees. Then they gave us directions to Malaysia.

After four days, we were still lost on the sea. Luckily, we drifted to Mersing on the fifth day morning before we devoured each other. We were brought to Pulau Tioman camp, which is where I lived for a year. Then my whole family came to (the) U.S.A.

Now that I have been living in the U.S.A., never again will I forget the suffering, discouragement and maddening nights at sea as long as I live. It was a death that will remain with me forever as we thank God for our rebirth and chance to live as human beings in freedom in America.

Teachers,

Statesman-Journal photo by Gerry Lewin

IMPORTANT COMMUNICATIONS — Instructor Sandy Banasik works with students at Salem School District's Newcomer Center, a program designed for Southeast Asian refugee students who have just entered the school system. Banasik, a linguist who does not speak any Southeast Asian language, uses lots of body motion to communicate with her students. The students often stay in the center, located at Waldo Middle School, for as long as six months. Above, she works with students (left to right) Piseth Kang, Thanh Tran and Mai Diep (standing).

Sandy Banasik looked like she was playing a game of charades.

In a way, she was. Only she was allowed to speak.

Hands waving, fingers pointing, the 42-year-old Salem teacher used all available means to cross the wide language gaps of a class of Southeast Asian refugee students.

"Pick up the pencil," she said as she clasped the No. 2 lead.

Slurring a few consonants, the students repeated the words in unison.

Banasik continued, "Sharpen the pencil," and she rolled her right hand like she was cranking a wheel.

"Feel the point. Ouch. It's sharp," she said using more body language and articulation.

AFTER CALLING out English phrases, she stopped to let her students repeat the words.

When describing the word "light," she pointed to a fixture on the ceiling. Again, using hand motions, she noted that the same word can be used to describe "light as a feather."

The students in Waldo Middle School's Newcomer Center spoke little English. And Banasik, a linguist, spoke few words of their native languages.

But learning was taking place.

It is the kind of learning happening throughout the country in classes designed primarily for Southeast Asian refugee students.

SIGNIFICANT changes have been made in education programs for refugees since they first came to the U.S. in 1975.

In many cases, those changes were the result of the changing needs of the refugees now entering the school system.

Changes also have evolved as educators explore more creative ways to teach children a second language.

pupils climb language barrier

The success of those programs are a key to the difficult years just ahead for the refugees.

During the late 1970s, when refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos first began coming to this country, refugee students generally were more educated. But most could not speak English.

TODAY, THE majority of refugees still come to the country without English skills. They often have missed large portions of school in their native lands as well.

As a result, they are forced to play catch-up in school, more so than those who preceeded them in this country.

The older refugee students, expected to graduate within a few months to a few years, have the most difficult task.

They must pass the usual required courses, such as social studies, science and math. But language is a major barrier, particularly when they are placed in a regular classroom setting with English-speaking children.

WITH THIS sort of backdrop, educators continue to ask the same question: "How do we teach these people a second language in time to prepare them for a complex world in a strange land?"

The response varies from district to district and school to school.

It is like a giant science labratory, complete with failed experiments and new discoveries. Results likely will not be shown for years, although many educators believe they now are on the right track.

"Our awareness of the kids' needs has increased," said Sue Haverson, who teaches English as a Second Language at Waldo. "I've changed my teaching approach."

HAVERSON IS part of a growing wave of bilingual teachers who are experimenting with new approaches to teaching a second language.

In fitting with the times, Haverson and many others are using a "natural approach" to teach English to refugees.

"There is a natural development of language if meaningful input occurs," said Haverson, who helped start the Southeast Asian refugee programs at Waldo.

Tracy Terrell, a language authority from the University of California at Irvine, is perhaps best known as the originator of the "Natural Approach."

HE SAID, "The majority of our students in one- and two-year language courses do not attain even a minimal level of communicative competence."

Terrell's method is an alternative to the traditional grammar-based approach that, for example, teaches students to correctly use the two forms of the verb "be" in the past tense.

Terrell believes language instruction should be focusing on communication rather than grammar.

Another popular method of language instruction involves students learning a second language subconsciously, according to Stepehn Krashen, professor of linguistics at the University of Southern California.

KRASHEN COMPARES it to the way a child learns language. The child picks up most of the language through day-to-day activities and "meaningful input" rather than through a structured langauge approach.

"Research has discovered another way to drill, drill, drill," said Waldo instructor Mary Lou Obloy. She calls it "tricking the mind into thinking they are learning something else."

The "tricking" process goes on in various classrooms. It involves keeping children active and talking.

During one of Haverson's recent classes, students were discussing rainy weather.

A CHILD recalled his days of hunting for frogs in the rain when he was in Vietnam. The story brought laughter, jogging the memories of his fellow students.

Haverson encouraged conversation about their childhood experiences in Southeast Asia.

Later in the class, a child asked Haverson why the word "carefully" had an "ly" on the end of it.

Haverson declined to explain, saying, "You will see that later on."

Grammar will come later, she told a reporter visiting the classroom. The key is to keep the students talking and communicating.

A NOISY classroom is the best classroom, according to Banasik, who taught African students for eight years before coming to Salem last fall.

Harold Wingard, head of the second language department in the San Diego School District, also likes noisy classrooms.

However, left to their own ways, some teachers still prefer the traditional classes featuring written tests, drill and practice.

Wingard said he recently spent a day as a substitute teacher in a class of Southeast Asian students. The regular teacher left him several worksheets to assign to the students.

THE STUDENTS sat there "filling in 'has' and 'have' on blanks," Wingard said. "It was difficult to make the class oral. They were so quiet."

"And the school thinks she's a top- notch teacher," he said.

San Diego schools are in the forefront of another "experiment" in programs for Southeast Asian students with limited-English speaking skills.

In San Diego, the number of Southeast Asian refugee students has increased from 474 in 1975-76 to 6,480 last year.

The district has had a high percentage of His-

panic students for several years. It has gone through the usual political battles over issues related to bilingual education.

TO ADDRESS the special problems of refugees, the district adopted an experimental program called "sheltered English," which is used by a few others in the country.

The program is an alternative to mainstreaming, which places limited-English speaking students in regular classrooms.

In most school districts, refugee students are segregated for classes like English and social studies, but placed with English-speaking students in classes like math and physical education, which rely less on language and concepts.

Refugees in school

CONTROVERSY over bilingual education, and the limited number of language teachers, has encouraged schools to move these students into regular classrooms as soon as possible.

But many educators have discovered refugee students are getting "lost in the crowd" of English-speaking classes if they have not mastered their new language.

For example, Barbara Bush taught music last year to classes of Laotians and English-speaking students at Pershing Junior High in San Diego.

The Laotian students generally got so far behind other students after a couple of weeks that they learned little during the school semester, she said.

THIS YEAR, the Laotians were placed together as part of a new sheltered English approach. And although the class covers only half of the regular curriculum, the Laotians have excelled at the slower pace, Bush said.

"I was overwhelmed with the slowness at first," said Bush, who has had no training in teaching a second language. "I wasn't sure I liked it."

Bush now says the "benefits are tremendous," and the enthusiasm showed during a visit to her classroom.

The students were visibly excited when they correctly identified a long list of orchestra instruments. They learned only a few of those words last year, she said.

"IN THE PAST, kids were thrown into English language courses with no success," Wingard said.

Salem's McKay High School instructors also have sought to solve the problem of refugee students getting lost in the crowd.

"Everybody was shaking their heads, saying there's got to be something else we can try," said McKay instructor Linda Hoover.

McKay developed a transition course for those students getting ready to enter a regular classroom.

The classes are similar to what they would get in a mainstream setting. But like the sheltered English courses, the McKay courses are toned down to a slower pace for limited-English speaking students. They are taught in English, often by teachers with no previous experience in bilingual education.

"AT FIRST, I had a real concern," Hoover said. "It was isolation of students."

But the success of the refugees has changed her mind. The success also has stirred a new wave of enthusiasm among teachers.

"Teachers were standing in line when word got out about what it is like working with these students," Hoover said.

Dolli Asaro, who runs a reading program at San Diego's Montgomery Junior High School, echoes that enthusiasm.

"They take it much more seriously," Asaro said of her Southeast Asian students. "They're just like hungry little birds."

She added, "it's something our students seem to have lost, and that's kind of sad."

Adjusting

Sometimes the hurt is blatant.

Like the time someone yelled, "Go back home" to Chhay Kea, a Cambodian refugee now living in Salem.

Or when a student walked up to a Salem youngster and chanted, "Ching, chang, chow."

Fortunately, the ugly racial incidents are the result of only a few people, says Kea, "so I don't care."

A more pressing concern to refugees is the subtle but wide cultural gap that still exists between Americans and Asians eight years after the first refugees set foot in this country.

Besides overcoming language and economic barriers in this country, the Southeast refugees cry to be understood.

In schools, the lack of cultural understanding affects the way they are treated by fellow students and teachers.

A 15-year-old high school student in Seattle recently was asked about a fellow student from Cambodia.

"At first, I thought he was dumb because he couldn't do worksheets," the Ballard High School student said, "but I realize it was just because he couldn't speak English."

The cultural gaps in American schools are difficult to measure. But a glance at some American social studies textbooks says a lot.

The books often ignore such nations as Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Instead, they focus on Japan, China and Korean in their Asian sections.

The gap also is measured by the general lack of knowledge Americans have about their new neighbors from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

Helen Koopman, a Jefferson High School teacher, said she thought at the beginning of the school year that all of her Southeast Asian students spoke the same language.

is painful

Others, she said, thought the new wave of refugee students coming to the Portland school were all from Vietnam.

Koopman has learned a lot since then.

As head of an experimental science class, designed for limited-English speaking students, she has learned much about the people themselves, as well as some creative ways to teach science to students with a limited vocabulary of English.

"If they can see it, do it, they'll remember it," said Koopman, who relies heavily on experiments, diagrams and photographs.

Throughout the country, educators and students continue to be caught off guard when they first encounter the Southeast Asian culture.

A suburban Portland physical education teacher recently asked Thanh Hai Vominh to help him translate about 35 Southeast Asian names into English.

Vominh, program director for the Southeast Asian Refugee Federation in Portland, termed the request an insult to the Southeast Asian community.

"These people have left everything behind," said Vominh, who came to the United States from Vietnam 14 years ago. "Their names are the only thing they have left."

Most school officials admit they knew little about the Southeast Asians before they arrived in this country. And most officials have addressed the problem in a limited way.

Often educators deal with it piecemeal, sponsoring activities such as in-service training for teachers and presentations of Southeast Asian dances and foods.

Some schools, however, have taken extra measures to create understanding between the newcomers and American students.

At Portland's Madison High School, Kriss Montgomery developed a program to help freshman students understand their new Southeast Asian classmates.

Montgomery, an instructor, said the idea was to set up a situation in freshman social studies classes, where every student would have contact with a refugee student.

During a three-day period early in the school year, each freshman student is required to interview a refugee student, then write an essay about the experience.

"It has reduced fights," Montgomery said. "We used to have some major ones."

She said, "A lot of them have a lot of hostilities and they need this forum to get their questions answered."

A more ambitious program to increase awareness of refugees was started this year in Seattle Public Schools.

Bilingual teachers Emilio Castillo and Gregory Chan are heading a one-year, federally funded pilot project involving 10 sessions a quarter on Southeast Asian cultures. The classes, held at Ballard High School, are geared to fit into the regular social studies curriculum.

"Our purpose is not to change attitudes," said Chan, "but they have to be sensitive to their situation."

"If the Seattle desegregation plan is to succeed, it should involve more than just busing," he said.

Castillo said that in past social studies courses, "there was no such thing as the Southeast Asian perspective."

Based on questionnaires given before and after the first semester of the pilot program, it appears many students felt more positive about the refugees, Castillo said.

The program is not meant to take the place of existing courses of study, he said, but rather, to "enrich that which has been so cursorily treated."

"The cultural gap is so broad that you just can't think of providing English," said Beatriz Andrews, bilingual coordinator at Western Oregon State College in Monmouth. "Family expectations are different. Children feel rejected in the new culture, but if they accept the new ways, they can't communicate with their parents."

And just as the students need educating about the newcomers, so do instructors.

Vominh, of the refugee federation, explains the type of problem an uninformed teacher may face.

"A Southeast Asian smile is a puzzle to many Americans," Vominh said. "Where the smile seems to be inappropriate, it could be an expression of friendliness, shyness, disappointment, anger or worry."

She cited an example of a teacher who was upset because his Indochinese student never answered when asked whether or not she understood a lesson.

The student just sat there and smiled, Vominh said. She couldn't say she understood, because she didn't. She couldn't say she didn't understand, because it would imply the teacher was not very good.

"In this case, the safest thing is not to say anything and use the smile to cover embarrassment," Vominh said.

An instructor also needs to know about various ways Southeast Asians are taught to be polite, Vominh said.

"The polite response of not looking in the eye while talking could be misinterpreted as a response of an insecure, dishonest or even emotionally disturbed person," she said. "In Southeast Asia, looking in people's eyes could mean disrespect or challenge."

Cultural awareness programs for teachers is important, Vominh said, but the attitiude of teachers is even more crucial.

"If you don't feel accepted, it won't work," she said. "It comes first from your heart, then everything will follow."

Programs vary widely

They are Cambodian and share the same career goal: Both Sochitra Heng and Bouarom Phan would like to teach in American schools.

But Heng, of San Diego, clearly is closer to achieving her aim. Phan, who lives in Salem, sees little chance of getting his teaching credential.

The disparity in their futures helps describe the state of refugees in this country.

Opportunities are emerging, but the pace is slow and likely to continue that way for some time.

The two already passed the test overseas.

Passing the test here hinges on their survival skills in our culture. It also hinges on options open to them in various American schools.

Heng, a 23-year-old refugee, is involved in an extensive three-year teacher-intern program offered by the San Diego School District. Now in its second year, the ambitious program has 23 participating interns.

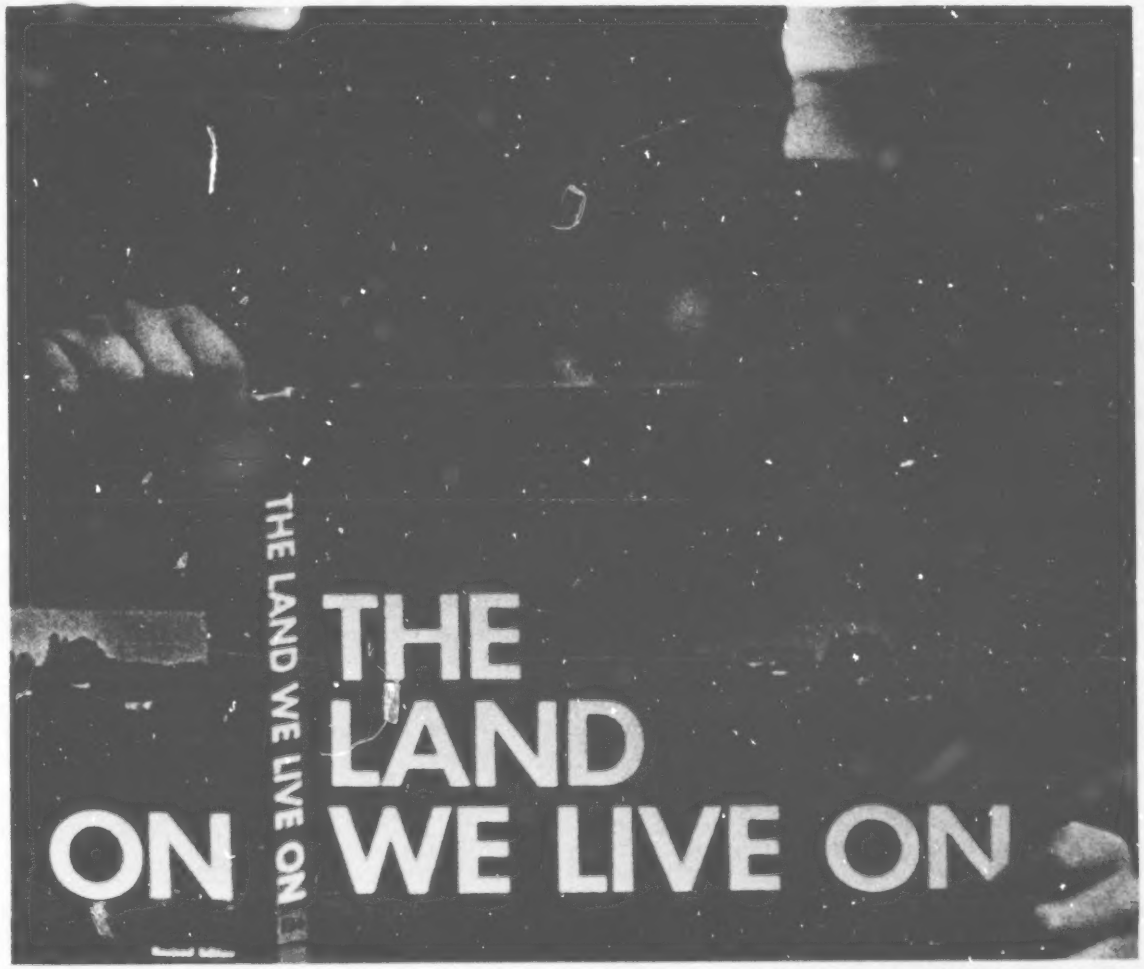
The district pays refugees to work in a supervised classroom similar to that provided to a student teacher. It also pays them to attend college classes after school and on weekends.

"It's a great opportunity for me to work with students in my own language," Heng said during a class break at Euclid Elementary School.

Phan, 29, an aide and interpreter at Washington Elementary School, does not have the same opportunity in Salem.

Given the chance, Phan said he probably would attempt to get his teaching credential. But taking a few years off to return to college at his own expense poses hardships.

A former teacher in Cambodia, he now has a family to support and bills to pay. And his wife



Statesman-Journal photo by Dean Koepfler

Cambodian Sokchea Chim explores new lands in Washington Elementary class

has tuberculosis.

"Some months I have to pay for the hospital," Phan said. "Some months my money is not enough."

A lack of Southeast Asian teachers in this country's schools remains a major concern of the refugees.

Bringing them into the school system is one way of improving their situation here, refugees and American educators generally agree. It would bridge some of the language and cultural gaps that exist for all students, they say.

Heng spends an hour a day in an English-speaking class. She spends much of her time answering questions from American students about her homeland.

The addition of Southeast Asian teachers would be a positive step in the long journey for refugees, all agree.

But what is the most efficient means of getting Southeast Asians into the school system? And given the limited resources of smaller districts like Salem, is it practical to launch a program here?

The questions go on and on.

How do districts best address the lack of cultural awareness among students and educators?

What language programs are best-suited for refugee students?

How do districts best prepare refugee students for the real world, fraught with a shortage of jobs?

The questions are easy. The answers are not.

The key seems to lie in communication with one another — from district to district, from school to school, from educator to educator.

It sounds simplistic, but during recent visits to several West Coast school districts, a reporter was told repeatedly by teachers and administrators that they were unaware of innovative and successful programs elsewhere. Several said they would like the opportunity to explore what others are doing.

Educators dealt with bilingual issues and refugees long before the Southeast Asians came to this country. But their unfamiliarity with people from Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia has thrown new hitches into the works.

Innovation has become an important factor in many schools, including those in Salem.

Susan Haverson, who teaches at Waldo Middle School in Salem, said federal funds and the district administration have "allowed us to be exposed to state-of-the-art speakers."

She said she taught English to Spanish-speaking students for 12 years in California schools.

"But I have been stimulated more here, because we've been exposed to exciting new ideas," she said.

Salem takes pride in its 3-year-old Newcomer Center, a refugee program other school districts have emulated.

The center, at Waldo Middle School, is starting point for all refugees entering the district. Students often stay there for more than a year, until they are ready for the regular classroom.

Salem also is at the forefront in methods of teaching English as a second language. And it has developed some special programs to fit its particular needs.

Looking ahead, the district is seeking federal funds to start a special computer-assisted bilingual program.

Looking at the variety of districts on the West Coast, it is difficult to compare the quality of their refugee education programs.

The districts vary considerably in size, as well as in their ethnic makeup and geographical location.

Their problems also differ.

In Seattle, teacher layoffs shook up the programs for limited-English students because the instructors with less experience were first to lose their jobs. They were replaced by teachers with more overall experience but little or no experience in teaching a second language.

In San Diego, the word "bilingual" is so political Hal Wingard eliminated it when he took over

Statesman-Journal photo by Ron Cooper

McKay teacher Larry Nelson in new class designed for refugee students

his department. He now heads the "Second Language" program in San Diego.

"What you have is tremendous demagoguery, tremendous advocacy, people crying to eliminate bilingual programs," Wingard said.

"We're still in a guess-and-by-golly stage," said Kriss Montgomery, discussing placement criteria for refugee students at Portland's Madison High School.

In Salem, schools have had to develop refugee programs using English-speaking teachers.

To help eash refugee students into mainstream classroom settings, Salem's McKay High School relies on regular classroom teachers like Ann Terry, the daughter of Russian immigrants who also had to learn English as a second language.

Terry, an English teacher, works with the limited-English-speaking children one period a day.

"Oh, do I know the pitfalls," she said.

McKay also used logic and creativity in hiring an elementary school teacher, Louise Ballantyne, to teach secondary students.

Her students are Southeast Asian refugees, but their skills levels are still at the elementary level when they first come to McKay.

Salem also has the advantage of Chemeketa Community College in its neighborhood.

Joyce Wilson, who has been involved in language instruction since the 1950s, came to Chemeketa as a volunteer in 1975.

She now heads a successful program, which has used 10 separate federal and state grants, as well as local funds, to help provide language and vocational training for refugees.

Chemeketa has been at the forefront of developing language material for refugees, Wilson said.

Other school districts have also developed programs worth emulating.

The Seattle School District is engaged in a new program to help find jobs and vocational programs for "over-aged" refugee students nearing graduation from high school.

Sharon Chew, a half-time district employee, devotes most of her shift to job counseling and referral of refugee students to job-training programs.

"I'm seeing more and more students coming off public assistance," Chew said.

Seattle also is trying to address another big refugee concern, the lack of school counselors.

Janet Lu, project director of federally funded Title 7 programs in the Seattle schools, said she has proposed to add six refugee counselors and social workers.

The proposal would help provide equitable treatment for refugee students, decrease disciplinary cases and increase the cultural awareness of other counselors, Lu believes.

In the final analysis, the Southeast Asians want to be treated like their fellow students.

They want counseling, job training and a chance to attend college. They want to learn English. They want to be accepted.

The pleas are heard by students of all cultures.

To address the refugees' needs is to address the concerns of all people.

Students and teachers in this country could benefit by the increased understanding of people from distant lands.

The job-training programs developed to help refugees likely will benefit the entire community.

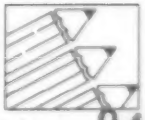
The attention now being given to teaching a second language also will be important.

Meanwhile, educators continue to search for new ways to address the refugees' special needs. And they may need only to look next door.

Refugees in school

MainStream Newsletter
Plymouth, Michigan

Indian Children in Detroit

An Article  *By Rick Smith*

Strangers to the City?

Georgie Bearskin, a new generation of Urban Indian.
Photo Rick Smith

Native Americans have long been a hidden segment of America's cities.

Lured to the city in search of economic opportunity, Native Americans residing in urban areas have experienced a tremendous growth in population over the last decade leading to a new breed of American Indian: The Urban Indian.

Trying to hold on to a cultural identity diametrically opposed to mainstream American values, Indians walk a delicate tightrope between two worlds in order to survive in urban America.

"We don't commit cultural genocide", says Russell Wright, Director of Detroit Urban Indian Affairs. "We must walk in two worlds", says Wright.

"The Detroit area has long been a mecca for Indian people", says Edmund Danziger, Professor of American Indian History at Bowling Green University.

"I've made it in the white world, that's how I am viewed here on the Island. They thought it was better out there, in the white world, and I thought it was better here", says Dean Jacobs, Director of the Research Center on the Walpole Island Indian Reservation, who gave up the promise of a successful career in the city to work for his people.

The Detroit American Indian Culture School, located in the Cass Corridor, known for its large inner city Indian population, is attempting to bridge the gap between the reservation and the strangeness of the city.

About the Author

RICK SMITH has been involved with Indian education throughout the Detroit area since 1978. Currently employed by the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, Plymouth, Michigan, as Project Director of the Plymouth-Canton Indian Education Center, Smith authors "The Mainstream," a quarterly newsletter published by the Center.

Smith holds a BS degree in Anthropology from Western Michigan University, and is currently completing a master's degree at the University of Michigan School of Education.

Smith is also a freelance photographer/reporter for *The Community Crier*, a weekly newspaper located in Plymouth, Michigan, and the Observer/Eccentric Newspapers, a bi-weekly chain of suburban newspapers in the Detroit metropolitan areas.

Author's Note: This story is not complete without a word of gratitude and thanks to the Detroit and Walpole Island Indian communities. Never had I met a more friendly and sharing people.

Four year old Samantha Aikens, fresh off the Walpole Island Reservation, maintains contact with Indian people at the Detroit American Indian Culture School.
Photo Rick Smith

Every Saturday when most kids are glued to the T.V. screen watching their favorite cartoons, four year old Georgie Bearskin wakes up, gets dressed and rushes off to school.

Once at school, Georgie joins friend Samantha Aikens and 200 other Native American classmates to learn of their common heritage.

A new migrant to Detroit from the Walpole Island Indian Reservation, located across the St. Clair River in the swamplands of southern Ontario, four year old Samantha Aikens attends the culture school each Saturday to learn of her Native American heritage, first hand, from other Indian people.

"It's the only chance for my kids to see other Indian kids", claims Pueblo Indian Jessica Bearskin, instructor at the school.

"Indian students are isolated in the schools, and this is the only opportunity for them to come together with other Indian people", says Judy Mays, Director of the school, and also a Native American resident of Detroit.

Mays estimates that 25% of the children enrolled in the school are reservation people who, "a lot of times have adjustment problems coming from the reservation to the city, so we serve as a support group for the kids and for their parents."

Working to improve the student's self image the school's curriculum includes instruction in such subjects as , American Indian History/Culture, Pow-Wow Dancing, American Indian Art, as well as in such traditional subjects as reading and math. "A central portion of our program is cultural

awareness which improves the student's self image", says Mays.

The school works.

Indian students enrolled in the school do better in their regular school courses. According to the Office of Federal/State and Special Programs for the Detroit Public Schools, Indian students participating in the culture school show an additional increase of 7.5 months per year on standardized reading and math examinations.

For Judy Mays and the six other Native American instructors who teach at the school, it's not the individual attention and instruction that makes Indian children stay in school longer, but a sense of belonging to a community that keeps them in school.

"It's hard to have a sense of community in the city, and programs like ours tend to foster a sense of community among Indian people living in the city", says Mays.

"Urban Indians speak with no reservations", says Russell Wright. Wright has headed up the Urban Indian Affairs Office in Detroit for the past four decades. He has represented Native people in the city legally, socially, economically, and culturally.

Over the years Wright has witnessed the growth of a new generation of Indian. City bred Indians, according to Wright, are more tolerant of tribal differences, which has lead to the development of a "Pan-Indianism" movement currently spreading throughout the major cities of this nation.

"Pan-Indianism" moves beyond tribal differences drawing on themes that all indian people have in common.

"We have broken down the negative barrier of tribalism", says Wright.

The Detroit "Honor Our Children Pow-Wow" held each June 4th, in celebration of Pontiac's Rebellion against the British (1763) is but one example of Indians from many different tribal backgrounds coming together for a common purpose.

Held at Fort Wayne, the annual Pow-Wow is sponsored by the Detroit American Indian Culture School. Part of each Saturday is spent preparing for the event, with each student learning old traditional dances, as well as new "inner tribal" dances, dances which have developed within the last two decades, and are specific to no one tribe.

The Indian population in Detroit is growing faster than any other population in the city. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, the Native American population in Detroit has increased by 240% over the last decade, from 1970 to 1980. The population in 1970 stood at 5,203 and in 1980 the Indian population in Detroit had topped 12,487, nearly a third of the total Indian population in Michigan.

"There's a magnetic attraction back and forth between the reservation and Detroit", says Edmund Danziger.

Moving in "loops" as the Detroit Indians call them, today's urban Indians do not totally give up reservation life for city life, but, according to Danziger, many follow a path back and forth between the city and reservation, creating a very transient, mobile population.

"Every summer my mother would come back to the Island with us kids for the summer", says Dean Jacobs.

Jacobs, unlike many of his Indian counter parts born on the Island, was raised in Grosse Pointe, one of the more affluent areas of the Detroit metropolitan area.

Upon graduating from Grosse Pointe High School, Jacobs attended Eastern Michigan University, but for some reason even Jacobs is not sure of, he returned to the Island.

In 1974 he was elected to the tribal council, and today he has found inner peace with what he is and what his life is all about.

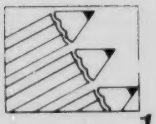
"By working for the tribe it gives me a sense of being more worthwhile, I want to see if I could do something in a small way for the tribe", said Jacobs.

Jacobs recalls that while his "loop" was shorter and lead him back to the reserve early in life, his fellow tribesmen viewed his move back with a suspicious eye. His friends in Grosse Pointe thought his move back was, "flashy, vogue, the thing to do, but when they come to visit, they see a different world, and they see I am at peace with myself."

Two Generations of Urban Indians, struggling to pass on traditions and values while immersed in mainstream America.
Photo Rick Smith.

The Dakota Sun
Fort Yates, North Dakota

Tribally Controlled Community Colleges

An Article  *By Albert E. Bruno*

Passage of tribally-controlled community college bill is critical

Some background...

Tribally-controlled community colleges (TCCCs) on 18 reservations are presently facing their toughest test in their search for fiscal stability.

Public Law 95-471 or the Tribally-Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978 has failed twice in the political arena of Washington, D.C., in 1983.

The recent setbacks in getting reauthorized worries Indian educators because continuance of funding is of critical importance to tribes and reservation people for the everyday operations and improvement of TCCCs.

The first passing of the bill on October 17, 1978, was a landmark breakthrough for Indian education because it gave stability to the growing community college movement on a number of western reservations in such areas as implementation of educational policy, curriculum development, personnel decisions, etc.

TCCCs were created in the late 60's and early 70's, in part, as a response to the high dropout rate of Indian students attending off-reservation higher educational institutions. In fact, a recent survey at the University of North Dakota convincingly indicates that Indian students attending TCCCs before attending an off-reservation institution perform much better overall than students who do not attend a TCCC before enrolling at an off-reservation college.

The Navajo Community College was the first Indian organized and controlled institution of higher education on an Indian reservation and was founded in 1968.

At present, there are a total of 18 TCCCs in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Arizona, Washington, Nebraska, and California. Of those 18 TCCCs, 17 are active members of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC).

AIHEC is committed to the betterment of higher education for American Indians and Alaskan Natives. AIHEC views all 18 TCCCs as similar in the respect that they are all: 1) tribally chartered and under the authority of a tribal government, 2) governing boards are made up of Indian people, 3) the majority of the students who attend are Indian, 4) they are located on Indian reservations, 5) they reinforce tribal cultures and still offer a traditional curriculum giving students skills necessary for a future in whatever field they choose while retaining their cultural heritage, and 6) they offer community services.

Two bills fail...

The most recent defeat of

About the Author

ALBERT E. BRUNO, 26, has been the managing editor of *The Dakota Sun*, a weekly newspaper located at Fort Yates, North Dakota, on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, for the past three and one-half years.

His reporting specialties are Indian jurisdictional issues such as Indian treaty and water rights as well as issues involving state and federal funding.

In July of 1981, Bruno was recognized as an Outstanding Young Man of America for his dedicated community service and outstanding professional achievements. He is both a member of Sigma Delta Chi (Society of Professional Journalists) and the North Dakota Newspaper Association.

Bruno is a 1979 journalism graduate of Canisius College in Buffalo, New York. He was recently awarded a teaching assistantship from the University of Illinois at Urbana, Illinois, to pursue a Master of Arts Degree in Journalism.

the TCCC bill occurred on May 5, 1983, in which the House voted not to suspend its procedures rules and forced the sponsors of the reauthorization effort of the TCCC Act to take it through the normal House process of amendments and majority vote.

The bill received a 255-148 majority but needed two-thirds majority - or 269 - votes for passage. The passage of the bill was 14 votes short of the mark.

The bill, if it would have passed, would have authorized $33.2 million a year through 1987 to 18 TCCCs for operational costs and technical assistance.

On May 3, ranking minority member John N. Erlenborn (R-ILL) told the House that the administration opposed new programs created by the bill.

Erlenborn said the Office and Management and Budget feared the provision of construction authorization which could result in "a fairly significant expenditure of federal funds."

He also felt that endowments should remain the responsibility of the private sector.

Rep. Paul Simon (D-ILL), sponsor of the bill, insisted the bill would not mandate new construction but simply permit it if the General Services Administration recommended it and the Appropriations Committee approved it.

Reagan administration allies mounted a campaign in the House which led to the defeat of the bill.

Rep. Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and other lawmakers said the colleges are a good way to alleviate continued high unemployment on the reservations.

"I just think you have to make investments in people," said Dorgan.

"Paying welfare will not solve their future problems, but investing in education will prepare them for tomorrow," said Dorgan.

Simon said he expects the bill to pass in the coming weeks when it is brought back to the House floor under regular procedures that require a simple majority vote for passage.

The bill, in effect, would authorize $5 million a year to help build endowments and "such sums as may be necessary" for construction and renovation of buildings at the schools. Tribes would be required to match 25 percent of federal lands provided for construction and 100 percent of the funds targeted for endowments.

Senator Mark Andrews (R-ND) is presently preparing an identical bill that is expected to be reviewed by the Senate in the next couple of weeks.

AIHEC president Wayne Stein is confident that the bill will be reauthorized. He said the present bill is authorized until September 30, 1984.

Stein focused in on what he perceives to be the problem with the bill's passage, "The bill is in trouble with the Office of Management and Budget," said Stein.

"It's a people's bill, not a defense bill," said Stein.

The other defeat of the bill occurred earlier this year on January 4, 1983, in which the bill cleared both the House and Senate and headed to the President at the end of a Congressional session who simply decided to "pocket veto" the

Pictured above is Standing Rock Community College [SRCC] in Fort Yates, North Dakota. SRCC is one of the 18 tribally-controlled community colleges in the United States. SRCC is also an active member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium [AIHEC].

bill until the next congressional session, an apparent midstream decision by the administration. He also had the options of either signing into law or outright vetoing it.

In his memorandum of disapproval of the bill dated January 4, 1983, the President was explicit in his commitment to providing educational opportunities for American Indians but objected to certain trust language in the text of the bill that would legally bind the government.

"...College-level Indian education has never been characterized in law or treaty as a trust responsibility of the federal government, and to do so now would potentially create legal obligations and entitlements that are not clearly intended or understood. Such a delcaration is wholly unnecessary to the continuation of a successful program of federal assistance to tribally-controlled community colleges...," said Reagan.

The President also objected to a section of the bill that allowed federal grants to be used for expansion of physical facilities.

"...When the program of assistance to tribally-controlled community colleges was originally conceived, the Congress contemplated the use of existing community facilities. To begin a major new building program when there are so many other competing tribal needs would be duplicative, unwarranted, and ill-advised under current economic conditions. Funds provided through the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the tribally-controlled community college assistance program are for program support only, and should remain so...," said Reagan.

Reagan also disagreed with a provision in the bill that would give Congress the

authority to veto regulations established by the Department of the Interior to administer the program.

"...Such a provision unconstitutionally encroaches on the principle of separation of powers that is the foundation of our government...," said Reagan.

In his closing remarks in the memo, Reagan assured TCCC authorities that present funding is not scheduled to expire until September 30, 1984. He also added that the administration would not interfere with the present program activities as a result of his note of disapproval.

"...It is my hope that Congress will reconsider legislation extending the act early in the next session and enact a bill which both advances the program's objectives and meets the administration's objectives...," said Reagan.

What some Indian leaders are saying...

AIHEC president Wayne Stein said if the TCCC bill fails to get enacted, it could pose serious problems for TCCCs.

"It's like every other bill, it comes second to jobs and defense bills," said Stein.

"If it fails to pass," said Stein, "tribally-controlled community colleges would continue to offer higher education but the diversity of the educational curriculums would be more limited."

Stein said for the TCCCs with the largest budgets, the TCCC bill may be about 40 percent of their total budget whereas it may as much as 70 percent for the small colleges and about 50 to 60 percent for midsized TCCCs.

He said other funding sources for TCCCs include title programs, vocational education programs, foundation monies, private endowments, grants, etc.

Former National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Executive Director Ronald Andrade said NCAI fully supports the TCCC bill.

In fact, Andrade said, "NCAI was one of the original supporters of the TCCC bill of 1978."

"The federal government should view and treat tribally-controlled community colleges the same way as they do Black colleges," Andrade said.

Don McCabe, chief of the division for postsecondary education for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Washington, D.C., said he fully endorses the TCCC bill. Prior to his appointment in Washington, D.C., McCabe was president of the Navajo Community College.

"Hell, we're shipping out billions of dollars to all these other countries, why not give some of that money to the Indians," said McCabe.

"They (the federal government) must take care of their own first," said McCabe.

McCabe said he supports the TCCC bill because of the tremendous help it gives students making the transition from high school on a reservation to a four-year college off-the-reservation.

"I've seen it work successfully firsthand," said McCabe.

The BIA head criticized tribes for lacking to give "real support" to TCCCs.

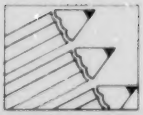
"The support of the tribes is minimal for tribally-controlled community colleges, it's a token support," said McCabe.

Section Two

Desegregation in the Eighties

The Virginian-Pilot
Norfolk, Virginia

Putting the Brakes on Busing

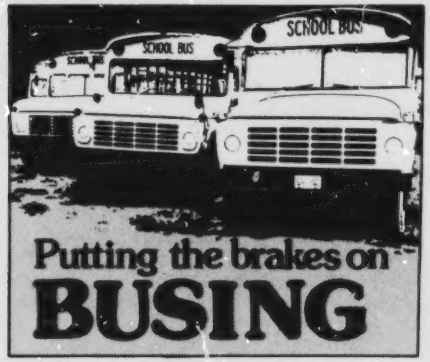
A Five-Part Series  *By Amy Goldstein*

Study casts doubt on Norfolk's school plan

Norfolk lacks qualities that have persuaded federal judges to let school systems halt cross-town busing, according to a study of three cities that have pursued neighborhood schools.

In joining a new wave of resistance to busing for desegregation, the city has embarked on a high-risk venture, the study, conducted by The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star, suggests.

But the courts have been so erratic and the number of parallel cases so small that no one



can predict with certainty which districts will succeed.

The six-week study, undertaken with a grant from the Institute for Educational Leadership Inc., a research foundation, focused on Denver, Colo; Little Rock, Ark.; and Richmond.

A dozen of the nation's leading scholars, lawyers and government authorities on school desegregation recommended those communities as likely to shed light on Norfolk's prospects for succeeding in its campaign to end cross-town busing.

The study says Norfolk's effort may be hindered by these characteristics:

- The schools have a lower percentage of black students than systems that have succeeded in reverting to a neighborhood plan.
- The proposal to end cross-town busing would lead to a higher level of segregation and would create several schools with white majorities.
- The School Board is divided over busing.
- The city's leadership includes relatively few blacks.

Norfolk's neighborhood school proposal is comprehensive and well-documented, the study shows. But the School Board, by drafting the plan without extensively consulting parents and other interested citizens, may have hampered its chances of success.

The research also indicates that school systems trying to stop busing for desegregation are flirting with unwanted side effects, regardless of whether their campaigns succeed. Race relations and community support for public schools may erode during the busing debate, and courts may impose new requirements regarding treatment of minorities.

Even districts that return to neighborhood schools, the study shows, do not always derive every benefit the Norfolk School Board expects. The enrollment of white students may continue to decline, for example, and

About the Author

AMY GOLDSTEIN received an AB in American Civilization, magna cum laude, from Brown University. Since June 1979, she has worked in Norfolk, Virginia at the *Ledger-Star*, which merged last fall with the *Virginian-Pilot*.

Goldstein's work over the last few years has won several awards, including the Virginia Press Association's 1982 public service award for the newspaper's coverage of the Norfolk busing controversy. She has been named the Virginia Young Journalist of the year by the state's UPI advisory board and the *Ledger-Star* writer-of-the-year.

Goldstein's series stems from the school system's efforts to create neighborhood elementary schools to replace its 11-year program of cross-town busing for desegration. She examined three school systems around the country that have made similar attempts—Little Rock, Arkansas; Richmond, Virginia; and Denver, Colorado. The resulting stories explore the factors that determine whether a school system succeeds in eliminating busing and the effects of a return to neighborhood schools.

parental involvement in education does not always increase. And although some black schools are likely to succeed academically, those in poor neighborhoods probably will be ripe for problems.

The examination of the three communities indicates that Norfolk's attempt to abandon cross-town busing is clouded by uncertainty.

But the survey is not definitive. Its conclusions come from studying just a quarter of the dozen urban school systems that in recent years have sought to abandon desegregation programs they did not want.

Indeed, educators and desegregation authorities agree that the fate of any attempt to reduce cross-town busing may stand or fall on the views of one judge.

"Every time you go back into court, it becomes a crap shoot," said Mark A. Smylie, who keeps track of school desegregation cases as director of the Education Equity Project at Vanderbilt University's Institute for Public Policy Studies.

Even David J. Armor, a sociologist who opposes cross-town busing and whose controversial research in Norfolk helped undergird the School Board's decision, agreed that any bid to end busing is fraught with uncertainty.

"It's such a new area," Armor said in a recent interview, "it's difficult to forecast the details of which ones will be successful."

The three communities examined by The Pilot and The Ledger underscore that point:

● In Denver, the School Board asked last year that U.S. District Judge Richard Matsch rule on a plan to end a decade of cross-town busing. The city had been unusually successful in desegregating its schools, and many Denver residents believed that the judge would agree to supplant forced busing with an array of special-interest schools open to any child in the district.

But after two weeks of testimony, Matsch branded the proposal "an exercise in escapism" and tossed it out of court.

● In Little Rock last year, the School Board released nine of its 27 elementary schools from a cross-town busing plan. Little Rock's history is scarred by a deep resistance to integration, and many observers thought the court would frown on the proposal because it would have left four racially balanced schools with virtually no white students.

U.S. District Judge William R. Overton ratified the plan.

"I concluded there was nothing unlawful about it," Overton said in a recent interview. "I could not see just some blind adherence to something that was not accomplishing anything."

● In Richmond, the School Board quietly agreed during the late 1970s to halt cross-town busing for almost all elementary students. Five years earlier, the community had been torn by an unsuccessful fight to merge the city and surrounding counties into a single school district.

But the move from busing was so peaceful, school administrators said, that it drew no opposition from Henry L. Marsh III, a longtime civil rights lawyer who was then Richmond's mayor. Today he represents blacks combatting the School Board's anti-busing plan in Norfolk.

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Denver, Little Rock and Richmond have different histories of desegregation. Their populations differ. And they are at different stages in their efforts to undo years of court-ordered busing.

Yet each, like Norfolk, has been shaken over the last few decades by the flight of white and middle-class families to the suburbs.

In the wake of such population shifts, urban districts are seeking new ways to foster desegregation in their schools. Some educators, for instance, are collaborating with housing officials to promote integrated neighborhoods. Others are looking toward mergers with surrounding suburbs, which often contain reservoirs of white students.

Moreover, the campaign to halt cross-town busing has been spurred by a swift and unprecedented reversal of federal policy. Some desegregation authorities believe that the promise of federal backing in the fight against busing may prove hollow, but the full impact of the new mood in Washington has yet to be felt.

Although these trends have helped motivate busing opponents across the nation, their fate depends on the characteristics of their communities.

Among the key determinants of success is a district's racial composition, the study says. The higher the percentage of minorities, the less likely a judge is to insist upon continued busing.

"School districts have a better chance of getting some reduction if they have a very high black percentage," said Norman Chachkin, deputy director of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a group, based in Washington, D.C., that has been active in school desegregation cases.

Although there appears to be no

"There are going to be some parts of the community that by history, economy, social factors will be more supportive of the schools than others. Simply by saying, 'We'll create neighborhood schools' does not mean parents will come automatically. It is not true."

— Ed Kelly, superintendent Little Rock, Ark., schools

magic percentage beyond which judges readily agree to abandon busing, Richmond in the late 1970s clearly was above the line. Its school system was 70 percent black a dozen years ago, when busing began, and is now 86 percent black. Norfolk's school system is about 59 percent black.

Even with a cross-town busing program, Smylie at Vanderbilt said that Richmond's huge black majority would make it "very hard to achieve a substantial number of whites in every school."

Closely related to the overall black percentage of a district is the effect a return to neighborhood schools would have on the level of desegregation in each school.

In Richmond and Little Rock, cities that actually have reduced busing, the switch resulted in a net gain in the number of desegregated schools.

Richmond gradually ended the pairing of elementary schools between 1976 and 1978. As the process unfolded, 13 schools became less segregated — that is, they had a higher percentage of white students — while 11 became more segregated.

Similarly, Little Rock's reorganization of elementary schools meant that four previously desegregated schools became all black. But at the same time, six schools ended up more integrated. The improvement occurred as the city's white students were spread among fewer buildings.

In neither district did the move toward neighborhood schools result in any predominantly white schools.

The percentages in those two systems contrast sharply with the numbers in Denver and the projected result of Norfolk's neighborhood school plan.

Unlike the Norfolk proposal, Denver's plan called for an unspecified number of special-interest, or "magnet," schools. In a system that is 39 percent white, every child would be free to attend any public school in the city.

The district did not submit to the court any estimate of the resulting racial balances, contending it was impossible to know how many children would choose to attend a special-interest school. Busing proponents argued that the number of newly segregated schools would soar.

The pro-busing plaintiff said that, if most children did not leave their neighborhoods, half the city's elementary schools would be predominantly white. Nine of the city's 79 elementary schools would be less than 10 percent white, according to exhibits filed in U.S. District Court in Denver.

Norfolk school district projections show that the neighborhood plan would mean that 12 of the city's 36 elementary schools would be more than 50 percent white, and 10 would be at least 95 percent black.

Although a system's racial composition appears to affect the likelihood that a court would permit less busing, the political climate surrounding the initiative is also an important factor, the study indicates. The more unified a School Board, the more probable it is that an anti-busing plan would be approved.

Two of Norfolk's School Board members, the Rev. John H. Foster and Lucy R. Wilson, dissented from the January decision to pursue the neighborhood school plan in court. More recently, another member, Robert L. Hicks, has denounced his colleagues, contending they were not moving swiftly enough to abandon the busing plan.

In Denver, both friends and foes of busing deride what one member called the "ultrapolitical" nature of the elected School Board.

The Board's tack has altered repeatedly as pro-busing and anti-busing majorities came into power. The result has been a dizzying array of desegregation plans that were debated and sometimes submitted to the court in recent years.

Many Denver observers contend that, because the Board failed to provide clear direction, the anti-busing plan the court rejected had been drawn hastily and inadequately substantiated.

On the other hand, the switch to neighborhood elementary schools in Richmond was very smooth. Many residents believe that a key reason was the number of blacks running the school system and the city.

"Part of it is the manner in which it is approached," said Richard C. Hunter, the school superintendent. "We got everyone in town to sit down together. We invited the NAACP education committee representative."

In Richmond today, the mayor, city manager, School Board chairman and school superintendent are black. So is the majority of both the City Council and the School Board.

In Norfolk, three of the seven School Board members are black, and the seven-person city council has one black member. The School Board's chairman, Thomas G. Johnson Jr.; the mayor; and the city manager are white, though the school system got its first black superintendent when Gene R. Carter took over July 1.

At a busing hearing in spring 1982, William P. Robinson Jr., a black delegate, reflected the difference between Richmond and Norfolk when he said: "When Tommy Johnson says to the black community, 'Why don't you trust us?' there just is nothing to indicate we could or should."

But desegregation experts and school authorities agree that the attitude of the judge who hears a busing case can be just as significant as the character of the community and the school system.

"Like the ones that got busing in the first place," Armor said, "it will depend very heavily on the reaction of a local court."

And regardless of the outcome of the case, a school district that reopens the delicate issue of busing should be prepared for an escalation of tension between the races, the three-city study says.

"It is a sapping experience," said Overton, the federal judge in Little Rock. "Every hearing we've had in the case, we've had big crowds, a lot of interest. It tends to open up wounds. You just sort of keep this festering sore open all the time."

Omar Blair, a black School Board member in Denver who favors busing, saw a similar phenomenon.

"Any time you have a public display of difference of opinion on a school board, there is a domino effect," he said. "If the board is disruptive and upset, the staff starts choosing up sides."

And such uneasiness may prompt a continuing drain of white and middle-class students from the public schools.

"Every time we have a major change in a court order in this city, that's when we experience our greatest loss of kids," said Robert Crider, a former president of the Denver School Board and an opponent of busing.

By sending the courts a plan to end busing, a school system also may be inviting new judicial intervention.

In rejecting the Denver plan, for example, Judge Matsch made 10 demands that included more housing integration, the hiring of additional

"If a judge is going to be brought out of slumber in one of these cases, he'll hear a lot testimony they'd rather he didn't hear. Norfolk has a last-generation school order now. The new orders ask for much more."

Gary Orfield, professor of political science at the University of Chicago.

blacks and Hispanics and the elimination of inconsistencies in disciplining white and minority students.

Armor suggested that such requirements probably would trouble school officials more than the public.

"How much worse can it be?" he asked. "They still have mandatory busing."

Gary Orfield, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago and a leading researcher into school desegregation, says judges faced with busing disputes tend to meddle in broad issues such as housing integration and educational quality, along with the racial balance of the schools.

"If a judge is going to be brought out of slumber in one of these cases, he'll hear a lot testimony they'd rather he didn't hear," said Orfield, who advocates busing plans that include cities and their suburbs.

"Norfolk has a last-generation school order now," Orfield said. "The new orders ask for much more."

Finally, the study suggests, if a district manages to move from busing, the effect on the schools is far from certain.

The number of white students is not likely to swell quickly. In Richmond, for example, an increasing number of white children are attending a neighborhood elementary school in the city's affluent West End. But the number of whites in the district as a whole continues its decline of three decades.

And despite the new neighborhood schools in Little Rock, the number of white children in the system last fall was three percentage points lower than a year earlier.

Both the quality of education in a one-race school and the quantity of parental involvement, the study indicates, seem to depend heavily on the social and economic class of the students.

"There are going to be some parts of the community that by history, economy, social factors will be more supportive of the schools than others," said Ed Kelly, Little Rock's superintendent. "Simply by saying, 'We'll create neighborhood schools' does not mean parents will come automatically. It is not true."

In Little Rock, three of the new black schools seem to be succeeding academically, but the one in the city's poorest neighborhood appears to have been, as one teacher said, "programmed for failure from the start."

"The ones that have the chances of being least successful are in low economic areas," Kelly said. "If you had a white ghetto, you would have as many problems as an all-black ghetto.

"If you talk about integration and equality, you have to talk about socioeconomic lines, not just racial lines," he said. "To have a school system integrated racially but not economically — the school system is going to be left to the underclass. It'll be black and white, but it is still poor."

Opposition to busing has spread across the country

The fervor over busing that has seized Norfolk for the last 20 months is part of a powerful movement around the country that, as one civil rights attorney said, may "spell the end to the second Reconstruction."

So far, about a dozen large city school systems have tried to overthrow their cross-town busing plans.

"You're just starting to see the cycle now," David J. Armor, a sociologist, said recently. "I would expect to see more of it in the '80s."

More than a decade after a landmark Supreme Court decision permitted children to be transported across town in the name of desegregation, why are school districts trying to halt the buses?

The movement is the product of two migrations — of white and middle-class families to the suburbs and of federal policy to the right side of the political spectrum.

Like Norfolk, almost all urban areas in the country have undergone a population change over the last few decades.

A few quick facts underscore the point:

● A study released this year by the Washington-based Joint Center for Political Studies says that, as of 1980, 16 of the nation's 50 largest school districts had a majority of white students. Norfolk ranked 47th in size on the list, with a 59 percent black enrollment.

● Between 1968 and 1980, Atlanta lost 86 percent of its white students, while Detroit lost 78 percent and Chicago 62 percent, according to the study that was conducted for a congressional committee that last year held hearings into school desegregation.

While debate flares over the role of busing in this "white flight," one fact remains clear: In many school districts, desegregation has become increasingly elusive as the number of white children wanes.

As such shifts occur, racially separate school systems once again are becoming a fact of American urban life. And the revival of the seemingly once-resolved issue has raised broad questions as to whether integration tools such as busing, invented when school systems had a different racial composition, are appropriate implements today.

Although the trend by no means has bypassed cities such as Norfolk, school districts in Southern and border states tended to make progress in integration since the mid-1960s, while their counterparts in the North and West increasingly became segregated.

Alongside the changing urban population has emerged a second, more sudden trend: a reversal in federal school desegregation policy.

A decade of public opinion polls attests that busing has never been popular among

the majority of the American public. But communities have implemented desegregation programs because the U.S. Justice Department has sued — or threatened to sue — segregated school systems. For communities that failed to comply, the U.S. Department of Education dangled the whip of withholding federal money.

But under the Reagan administration, Justice Department suits against segregated school systems have stopped. In their place have emerged offers of help to a number of districts seeking to get rid of busing. Justice officials have conferred with Norfolk school administrators and attorneys, although disagreements over the means of testing the plan in court have prevented collaboration so far.

Congress has joined in the refrain, with the introduction over the last few years of a variety of legislation that would limit busing for desegregation. The bills have been unsuccessful.

Busing foes and supporters alike say they believe that the new mood in Washington has infused school systems with hope that they could at last act to abandon cross-town busing programs they have long disliked.

Mary Berry, commissioner of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, which staunchly supports busing, said: "Everywhere I go in the country, people feel, since the administration isn't going to cut off any money, it will support you if you cut off desegregation."

William L. Taylor, director of the Center for National Policy Review at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., agreed.

"You get an administration in Washington which is very opposed to any school desegregation remedy," Taylor said, "and people think the old rules don't apply."

Yet some desegregation authorities caution that those rules may prove tough to break.

Among top Justice Department officials, the elimination of busing "is clearly the political turf they want to stake out for themselves," said a trial lawyer in the department's civil rights division who requested anonymity for fear of losing his job.

"But they're faced with a very serious legal problem," the lawyer said, "because the effort to do that as thoroughly as they would like for political and ideological reasons has very little support legally."

"To say after a few years of reassigning students, 'All the discrimination has been eradicated' is not to look at the facts squarely," said Taylor, who is an authority on desegregation litigation. "I don't think the Justice Department will get very far."

A city eases cross-town busing

But Little Rock, Ark., is still struggling with segregation

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — A generation ago, a throng of jeering whites watched National Guardsmen escort nine black teenagers into Central High School, and Little Rock became a symbol of the federal determination to stamp out school segregation.

Twenty-five years later, in a reorganization blessed by the federal courts and backed by Little Rock parents of both races, 1,600 black children quietly enrolled in segregated elementary schools.

At first blush, the change, which left one-fifth of the city's black elementary students without white classmates, suggested that this state capital in the rolling Arkansas farmland may again have become a symbol — a sign that busing in pursuit of integration soon would be a thing of the past.

The logic is compelling: If the courts allowed a busing reduction in Little Rock, with its tarnished history, Norfolk's proposal for a return to neighborhood schools should receive a warm judicial reception. After all, the reasons for the busing reduction in this city nearly 1,000 miles from Hampton Roads echo as well in the Norfolk debate.

But other, more subtle factors suggest that Little Rock is unlikely to offer Norfolk a clear legal precedent.

For one thing, the Little Rock reorganization last fall was designed to reduce the busing of black children to predominantly black schools, a phenomenon that was far more common in Little Rock than in Norfolk.

In addition, only a third of Little Rock's elementary schools became exempt from cross-town busing un-

der the plan. Norfolk is seeking to end the practice in all of its elementary schools.

And the curb on busing improved the level of desegregation in many Little Rock schools; no predominantly white elementary schools were established. Norfolk's plan would create 15 schools with white majorities.

Perhaps the most critical difference, though, is that even the proponents of the reorganization in Little Rock view it as merely temporary. The district is pursuing in court the goal of balancing its racial composition by merging with nearby systems that are largely white.

"This is an intermediate step," said Ed Kelly, the school superintendent, "and it was not ever presented as anything else. If we had plans to increase the all-black schools, that would be horrible."

While its legal case may not align perfectly with that in Norfolk, the Arkansas district nonetheless offers one of the few examples of a neighborhood-school plan that succeeded despite the reappearance of segregation.

The new system, approved by the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals as well as by a federal district judge, allowed nine of the city's 27 elementary schools to become neighborhood schools. Five of the nine are desegregated, but three — Carver, Ish and Mitchell — are 100 percent black. At Rightsell Elementary, fewer than two dozen of the 350 children are white.

After one year, the reorganization has earned mixed reports. A study of the school system's records and dozens of interviews with educators, parents and community leaders disclose these details:

- The change has not stemmed white flight.
- Few students are exercising the option — similar to one proposed in Norfolk — to choose a school more integrated than the one in their neighborhoods.
- The caliber of the black schools is inconsistent. Two of them draw praise, a third has encountered some difficulties and the fourth is cited as a severe trouble spot.
- The return to neighborhood schools has in some but not all cases prompted parents to become more involved in the education of their children.
- In spite of the district's efforts to ensure that the four black schools

are not slighted, equity remains a hotly contested issue. The debate persists despite a monitoring system similar to one in the Norfolk School Board's plan to curb busing.

"We have some problems in those schools," said J.J. Lacey, special assistant to the superintendent for desegregation and federal programs, citing "discipline, disruption in the classroom, chaotic kids, upkeep of the buildings."

Kelly, the superintendent, cautioned: "You can't simply say, 'No all-black school is going to work.' And you can't say, 'Any all-black school is going to work.' "

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"If you look at it strictly from a historical perspective," said U.S. District Judge William R. Overton, who approved the reorganization plan in July 1982, "a lot of blacks might feel, 'Good gracious, here we are in 1983, and we're back to where we were in 1956.' "

The parallels exist, but Little Rock has evolved rapidly since the days before its desegregation struggle first became the focus of national attention. Indeed, at Central High, which is a National Landmark and is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places, the integration drama is no more than a fragment of history.

About half of the 2,000 students who attend Arkansas' largest high school are black. Blacks have been elected as student body president and homecoming queen.

"There are no separate dances, no separate anything," said Everett Hawkes, an assistant principal. "It's just simply not an issue for the vast majority of students."

But the last few decades also have brought less-welcome changes, some of which have parallels in Norfolk.

As the 1970s began, the black enrollment in Little Rock and Norfolk — each with populations about 25 percent black — was around 40 percent. Today, Little Rock's schools have shifted to 69 percent black, and Norfolk's to 59 percent.

In the last decade, the number of white students in Little Rock schools has dropped by more than half, from 13,413 in 1971 to 5,796 last fall. During the same period, Norfolk's white enrollment dipped less sharply, from 25,980 to 13,154.

A 1981 report on desegregation in Little Rock said: "White enrollment has declined year in and year out, both in years when new busing orders have been implemented and in years when policies thought to be attractive to white areas have been devised." The report summarized a study conducted by 22 social scientists, business leaders and educators from across the nation working under the auspices of the Technical Assistance Center at Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas.

The changing racial make-up of Little Rock schools has been exaggerated over the last decade because the city has annexed land from surrounding Pulaski County while the school district's boundaries have remained fixed. A change in district boundaries would have required an act of the state Legislature, which was unwilling to tangle with the issue.

As a result, 40 percent of the city's 88 square miles lay outside the school district by the end of 1980, the Austin study found, and there were in the city several virtually all-white county schools that are not included in the busing plan.

School officials do not yearn merely for white faces. "There are whites who leave and, when they go, they unfortunately take their checkbooks

with them," said Lacey, the special assistant for desegregation and federal programs. Little Rock, a school system with independent taxing authority, has had trouble in recent years gaining voter approval for tax increases.

Although Norfolk schools depend on the City Council rather than directly on the voters for funding, administrators have complained repeatedly that white flight has eroded popular support for public education in the city.

If parents, black and white, opposed higher taxes, they also balked at seeing their children bused long distances.

The four segregated schools were chosen on the basis of sentiment expressed during public hearings at which many black parents said they were tired of having their children shipped across town, recalled Annie Abrams, who heads an advisory committee, created by court order a decade ago, that helped devise the reorganization plan.

A graduate of segregated Little Rock schools, Mrs. Abrams was the first black PTA president at Central High, which her four children attended. Today, she said, "it is no different for people to long for the neighborhood school than to long for the neighborhood grocery store."

Although similar sentiments are expressed in Norfolk, the city lacks several characteristics that made the Little Rock plan palatable to the courts.

For instance, the Little Rock reorganization was designed largely to stop the busing of black children to virtually all-black schools. Researchers consistently argue that such busing is foolish because it does not enhance the mingling of black and white children.

Last year, 18 buses carried about 1,000 black elementary students — 14 percent of the total — to predominantly black schools in Little Rock.

In contrast, about 750 of nearly 12,000 black elementary students in Norfolk — or 6 percent of the total — were bused in the 1981-82 school year of "white" neighborhoods to predominantly black schools, said John McLaulin, assistant superintendent for management information and pupil personnel services. The number was about the same this past school year, McLaulin said.

In creating four virtually all-black elementary schools, Little Rock also sought to improve the level of desegregation in several others by spreading the white students among fewer buildings.

Several studies suggest that unless a school has a "critical mass" of about 20 percent minority students, meaningful integration is frustrated. In smaller numbers, the studies indicate, the students in the minority tend to feel isolated and cling together. The minority students also offer a presence too weak to provide cultural variety.

If Little Rock had not reorganized, Lacey said, the city would have had 10 almost entirely black schools. The change meant that, while the student population of four schools became more black, six schools became more integrated. In Norfolk, the neighborhood-school plan would yield no such net gain.

And, unlike Little Rock, Norfolk does not look upon its proposal as only an interim step.

Before unanimously approving the reorganization proposal, the Little Rock School Board agreed to file suit against two predominantly white suburban districts in an attempt to consolidate the school systems and increase the overall percentage of white students.

If the suit, which was initiated last November, succeeds, there will be more cross-town busing in Little Rock than there was before the reorganization last fall.

While the move toward neighborhood schools in Little Rock has stirred no opposition as organized as that in Norfolk, there still are dissidents. Perhaps the most outspoken is John Walker, a black lawyer who since 1964 has been representing the plaintiffs in what he calls "a fight that should not have been needed" to desegregate the schools. In two decades of civil rights battles, Walker has become a folk hero to many of the city's blacks.

"This plan brought out the racism that was dormant," he said. "It is simple state creation of segregated schools. And to segregate children on account of race is per se unconstitutional."

But Judge Overton disagreed, and, in April, so did the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals.

"White flight is something that can't be ignored," Overton said in an interview. "Obviously, if you're out deliberately creating four all-black schools, that has some really constitutional problems. That is returning to separate but equal. But the attendance patterns of those schools was not created with race in mind. They were created by natural circumstances.

"I wish it weren't that way. I wish we had a lot of white students in the district," said Overton, one of whose two teenage sons attends a Catholic school.

"It is a very unfortunate situation we've ended up with four virtually all-black schools," he added, "but I don't know any solution to it that has any meaningful benefits."

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Nearly a year after Overton's ruling, the success of the resulting plan remains unclear. If its purpose was to appeal to white families, it seems to have failed so far.

Little Rock's elementary schools enrolled 400 fewer whites this year than last. Throughout the system, white enrollment in all grades had dropped from 34 percent to 31 percent since last year — an annual decrease as large as any since massive busing began in 1973.

And there is little apparent enthusiasm for a "majority-minority" transfer program that permits children attending the four virtually black schools to select a less-segregated elementary school outside their neighborhood. Fewer than a dozen students are exercising the option, administrators said.

In Norfolk, several board members who oppose forced busing have argued that such transfers would be available to black children seeking a more integregated education.

"The option is there, theoretically, but from a practical standpoint it isn't happening," said Kelly, the Little Rock superintendent.

"It is not safe to say parents are satisfied with an all-black school," he said. Kelly speculated that parents are reluctant to invite the inconvenience of busing. Children, he said, prefer to go to school with their neighborhood friends.

The children in the neighborhoods around Mitchell — one of the four schools that are virtually all black — attend a pretty school, an airy structure built in 1908 and just remodeled. Sunlight filters through its tall windows and glints from the sparkling floors. The coffee and burnt-orange

walls create a sense of coziness. The classrooms are orderly, and the children — two-thirds of whom are poor enough to qualify for federally subsidized school lunches — appear to be learning.

Carver Elementary, 10 minutes away, is a different story. The children are unruly and often lag behind academically. Many of the teachers want to be elsewhere. Kelly, the superintendent, concedes: "The physical plant is far from good."

Though administrators say that all four black schools have high proportions of poor children, Carver's student body is by far the poorest. Even Kelly admits that, given all its problems, Carver was probably a bad choice for a neighborhood school.

In Norfolk, all three neighborhood elementary schools projected to be 100 percent black — Bowling Park, Tidewater Park and Young Park — are near pockets of poverty.

The Little Rock reorganization is too recent to measure with precision the caliber of education in the four black schools. But many students in each are having academic trouble, the school system's statistics show.

For instance, 79 percent of the first-graders at Rightsell and 69 percent at Carver are reading below grade level. They are the only two among the city's 27 elementary schools in which more than half the first-graders are below the appropriate level.

Carver also has the lowest or next-to-lowest percentages of students at grade level in first-grade math, second-grade reading, third-grade reading and math and fifth-grade and sixth-grade reading.

Despite such problems, many teachers applaud the fact that neighborhood schools mean children stay in the same building from kindergarten through sixth grade. Faculty members say that such continuity makes elementary education smoother and lets teachers watch student progress over the years.

Yet in some cases, the teachers' fondness for the six-grade system is overshadowed by their frustration at being assigned to the black schools.

"If you don't have a good, cohesive group of people, you can expect problems," said David Wallace, the principal at Mitchell. Its loss of 25 percent of the white enrollment "hasn't been too much of a deal here," Wallace said, "because I kept my staff."

Teachers at the nine new neighborhood schools were given the chance to transfer to other schools involved in the reorganization. At Mitchell and

Photo by Stephen Savoia

Ikeisha Lamb, 7, has a momentary lapse in concentration during a class at Carver Elementary School in Little Rock, Ark. Carver became a black neighborhood school last fall.

Ish, every teacher chose to stay. But 17 teachers left Carver, and at Rightsell, whose problems administrators rank second only to Carver's, about a dozen teachers left.

At Mitchell, Ish and Rightsell, principals and teachers cite a spurt in PTA membership and the number of parent volunteers. The improvement has been most notable at Mitchell. Parents were alarmed by the fact that student achievement dropped slightly there after the white students left, and, working with teachers, they inaugurated a Saturday school in which they tutored about 100 children a week.

The young black principal of Rightsell, Lionel Ward, said he thought the reorganization may have been beneficial for his school. "We have the basic materials as well as some of the extra goodies in greater quantity this year," he said. "It may be because we're a racially identifiable school. School people are more responsive because we are in a fishbowl, and people will be watching."

Walker, the civil-rights lawyer, disagreed. In the four black schools, he contended, "the expectations are different, the resources are different. They don't put as much money into them."

In an attempt to defuse such charges, the School Board set up last fall a committee empowered to visit the four black schools every six weeks and report its findings to the Board. A similar system proposed in Norfolk would be responsible to the courts.

The Little Rock committee has assessed books, equipment, staff morale and building maintenance, citing deficiencies at Carver and, to a lesser extent, Rightsell.

"It is a good-faith kind of effort to show, just because a school is all-black, it still can have good resources, good teachers," said Janice Shoate, a committee member who also served on the citizen group that helped draft the reorganization plan.

But some teachers and principals say the teams' half-day visits are too short to evaluate fully the quality of education in the schools.

"A watchdog committee is not enough," said Carver's principal, Winston Muldrew. "Unless you've got a tremendously active local community that will constantly take your school board to task, eventually, over time, things will begin to drift into a pattern of being overlooked."

Melissa Ripling, the teachers' association president who works at Carver, said: "Money doesn't buy equal opportunity. It never will."

"There is no money for field trips" in the school budget, she said. "But the children from Pulaski Heights Intermediate took a trip to the state capital, because all the mothers with station wagons took the children."

Walker contended that "equal" opportunity is an improper measuring stick. "If you put in the same pupil-teacher ratio, it's unfair," he said. At the black schools with a high proportion of low-income, hard-to-educate children, he said, "the need is greater."

Some observers speculate that once the novelty of all-black schools fades, the attention focused on maintaining them will wane. But Judge Overton said he did not fear a return to the neglected black schools of pre-integregation days.

"I don't think that's a particular danger," he said. "If they aren't furnishing comparable equipment, instruction, facilities, there is always a solution: File a petition."

But, even among those who believe students in the black schools will enjoy equal educational quality, questions arose concerning the cultural and psychological effects of a segregated education.

"You read a story about kids with freckles, and they don't know what they are," said Miss Ripling. In the past, she said, she grabbed the arm of a white child and exhibited the spots to the class. But this year she has no freckled model.

Walker put the matter more strongly: "What are you going to say to black children when they ask why there are no white children there? That they're not as good as other kids? Or there are too many of them? Or this is the only way they can learn? Or wouldn't it be better if they just went away?"

Added Kelly: "The four racially identifiable schools have the staff and resources to do an excellent job to teach children. But they are not desirable at all. I don't think they are realistic situations."

Poor, all-black school is 'not a happy place'

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — At 10 a.m., the children are spilling onto the cracked asphalt playground at Carver Elementary School.

Winston Muldrew, the principal, is standing in sparse grass at the asphalt's edge, several paces from jump-rope games and roughhouse versions of tag.

The midmorning tattling begins.

"There's someone getting in trouble — in *trouble*," a boy informs Muldrew.

"That girl's cussin' over there," a tall girl says. "OK, I'll take care of it," the principal assures her. He does not.

Then approaches a small, delicate child, her cheeks painted with tears. "Someone hit me," DeSaundra Lewis chokes out between sobs.

"I'll be right there to take care of it," comes the standard reply.

"It was Kevin. He was over at the basketball court."

"Kevin?" the principal echoes in

surprise. "He shouldn't even have been out here now."

This crisis is too large to ignore.

Minutes later, DeSaundra is sitting outside the principal's office, tears squeezing out of her big brown eyes. She's a third grader, pigtails fastened with white plastic barrettes, wearing a lacy pink shirt and pastel plaid skirt.

There is a quick conference with Muldrew, and DeSaundra, her sobs diminished to sporadic gulps, is ushered out his door with a promise that Kevin will, eventually, be punished.

Trouble like this, he explains, "is something we are constantly combating."

Carver Elementary School is the easternmost school in a city where the farther east you go, the blacker and the poorer the neighborhoods get.

A few yards behind the school stands a lumber mill that is being converted to a furniture factory.

In front of the one-story brick school building is a boarded-up house, its porch hanging at a precarious angle. Beside the vacant house is a driveway where Muldrew parks his car.

Built as a black school before desegregation began, Carver always has been a slipshod facility with its share of poor, black students, teachers and administrators said.

"It is so hideously tacky," said Melissa Ripling, a kindergarten teacher who is president of the city's teachers union, the Classroom Teachers Association. "The halls are awful, and it is not very well maintained."

In 1981-82, more than one-fourth of the 313 fourth-graders through sixth-graders who attended the school were middle-class and white.

But during the year ending this spring, all 500 kindergarten through sixth-graders were black. Almost all are poor.

Today, most educators in Little Rock, including the superintendent, say that naming Carver one of the city's four black neighborhood schools may have been a mistake.

"This is not a happy place," said Martha Strohsahl, a white, fifth-grade teacher who recently finished her first year at the school. "There's a lot of anger."

There is neglect, too.

A bulletin board next to the main office bearing the words "Star Students" contains no names.

Children in some classes daydream, nap or wander about the room.

In one girl's bathroom, a sink has a thick drape of wet paper towels. An unflushed toilet is missing a stall door. On the cinder-block wall, written in a child's large, uneven hand, are the words "Carver is a bitch."

To be sure, parents from around the city have volunteered in the last few months to perk up the place, giving the halls and main office a bright paint job and colorful signs.

But the signs' messages exaggerate the sense that this elementary school is out of control. "Show respect for others," one reads. "Follow directions of adults in the building," states another, while a third admonishes children to "Walk and be quiet in all areas of the building."

Before school opened last fall, teachers in all nine of Little Rock's new neighborhood schools were given a chance to transfer to any other school exempted from the busing plan.

At Carver, 12 chose to stay, while 17 transferred. The number who left was higher than at any other school in the city.

Some of the old-timers say Carver is no worse now than before.

"The attitude about the school is that suddenly it's the worst school in the world," said Frances Johnson, a fourth-grade teacher who has worked there for 10 years. "We still have the same problems and good things we have had."

Others disagree.

"This area of town is very dangerous," said Ann Norman, a music teacher working at Carver one day a week. "My husband doesn't like it."

Ethel Dunbar, a black sixth-grade teacher, said she decided to stay for the experience of working in an all-black school.

But today, Ms. Dunbar, who has worked at Carver for five years, said, "I wish the reorganization had not taken place." She added that she, like several teachers, is contemplating asking for a transfer.

"If I had to teach here five days a week, I would quit," said Ms. Norman, who added that a child had bitten her the previous week.

The children themselves seem divided on the virtues of going to a black school.

Eleven-year-old Lynn Anderson said she likes the switch. "I think it's better," she said. "Some white people think they're tougher than the blacks."

But many of her fifth-grade classmates held a different view.

"When the white people was here," said Anthony Brown, 12, "we had more activities, more field trips. It was nice."

Added Rhonda Sullivan, 11: "The whites should be able to come to this school. You miss your white friends."

From an academic standpoint, Miss Ripling said, "having the middle-class white children there gave an example of good behavior."

As the troubles inside the schools have mounted, the help from children's parents has waned.

"When we had busing," Miss Ripling said, "the PTA was mostly white parents."

Muldrew, however, remains optimistic. The number of parents attending conferences and PTA meetings increased somewhat after January, when the central school administration asked ministers of nearby churches to preach the virtues of visiting the school.

The principal calls the teachers' complaints "adjustment problems."

And he, along with some central administrators, suggest that Miss Ripling has tried to maintain a high level of discontent among her colleagues.

Also, Muldrew said that by this fall the school should have all the books, materials and playground equipment it has needed. "Beginning the second year, we'll be exemplary compared to any school in the system," he predicted.

But the Little Rock school superintendent, Ed Kelly, is not convinced.

"Stay away from creating all-black schools," Kelly cautioned. "Your really extremely low socioeconomic areas are your most difficult.

"I think Carver will get better," he said. "But if you ask me, 'Will Carver get to a point where I'm satisfied with it?' I'll say, 'No.' "

Richmond's end to busing quiet, welcomed

RICHMOND — When Richmond traded cross-town busing for neighborhood elementary schools in the late 1970s, hardly anyone took notice.

The switch was barely mentioned in the Richmond newspapers. And black leaders — including Henry L. Marsh III, then the mayor and today the lawyer for blacks who are fighting a neighborhood-school plan in Norfolk — uttered not a peep of public complaint.

Even Thomas Little, a retired school superintendent who had been the architect of Richmond's cross-town busing plan, admitted in an interview this spring: "I was not aware busing had been almost abandoned."

"There was no court hearing," said James A. Sartain, a sociology professor at the University of Richmond who was once retained by the federal government to advise school systems facing desegregation orders. "There was never an announcement of, 'Hey, we're returning to neighborhood schools, yeah, yeah, yeah.' "

"Technically, no one has ever declared Richmond has neighborhood schools," said Melvin Law, head of an advisory committee that recommended in 1975 the abandonment of cross-town busing. "But what Norfolk is asking for is what we have."

Why was Richmond able to abandon cross-town busing with none of the turmoil the effort has stirred in Norfolk?

Educators and community leaders suggest that the reasons included an overwhelmingly black school population, a black majority on the City Council, the presence of several blacks in the school system's leadership and the fact that the administration had quietly consulted a spectrum of community groups before releasing its neighborhood-school plan.

Today, even black administrators, politicians and community leaders say the reduction of cross-town busing has brought the very benefits the Norfolk School Board hopes to gain. Pointing to rising citywide test scores and what they claim is growing parental support for education, they argue that the Richmond schools are better off than they have been for years.

The fear that the virtually all-black schools would be neglected and inferior — a persistent theme in the Norfolk busing debate — is almost never voiced in Richmond.

And administrators, although emphasizing that white students are not essential to quality education, contend that neighborhood schools are, at last, stemming the drop in white enrollment.

Law, the advisory committee leader, said: "I do not see how any rational person can look at what has happened and say a busing plan of any description has any hope of integrating a school system."

During Richmond's cross-town busing of elementary children, he said, "the schools were being resegregated by the very remedy that was to integrate them. One shouldn't have to get pneumonia to know one doesn't want it. Norfolk doesn't need to drive the whites from the system to suddenly wake up one morning and realize, 'We shouldn't have done that.' "

Although Richmond reorganized its schools without a court fight, the neighborhood system has not been universally embraced. Among its critics is Earl Wheatfall, who replaced Law, a black chemist, as president of the Richmond PTA council last year.

"I think there would still be busing necessary if the school system were 100 percent black," said Wheatfall, who is also black.

"When we first started, it was for race-mixing," he said. But as the movement of whites to the suburbs left the school district increasingly black, he said, the system moved "beyond race-mixing to class-mixing."

"Middle-class black kids — kids who are talking about being a lawyer, a chemist — help encourage lower-class black kids," Wheatfall said. "We need to maintain busing to maintain pluralism in aspiration."

But an authority on black student achievement suggests that arguments on both sides of the issue may be molded more by political concerns than by busing's educational effects.

"You can't trust black public opinion to be very stable on the desegregation thing," said Robert L. Crain of Johns Hopkins University's Center for the Social Organization of Schools.

Some blacks cling to busing as a symbol of their struggle for integration, Crain said, while others believe that busing runs counter to their quest for power.

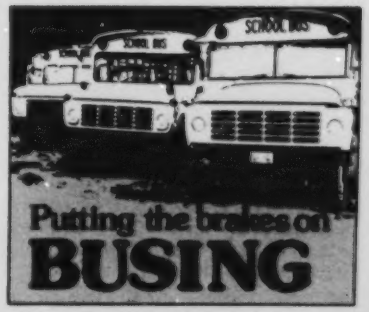
"A lot of black leaders want to say, 'We can run our schools and do just as well as *they* can,' " Crain said. "In Richmond, that's what you see.

"People form their views partly by asking, 'Who's on the other side?' " Crain said. He added that, therefore, some blacks in Norfolk think, " 'Anything the Norfolk School Board hates can't be all bad, right?' Part of it is the opposite of Richmond. Norfolk is a white-dominated city, and they're fighting city hall.

"It says a lot about politics and about racial conflict in America. But it doesn't say much about whether desegregation works."

●

When cross-town busing began in 1971, the number of white students in



Richmond's schools had been dropping steadily for nearly two decades. Seventy percent of the district's students were black, 11 percent more than in Norfolk today.

"There were just not enough white kids to go around," said Sartain, the sociology professor. "The busing of the elementary children was largely busing children of each race to another school that had almost the same racial balance as if they had stayed where they were."

Theodore Shaw, a lawyer for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, which strongly supports busing, agreed. "If the system is 86 percent black," as Richmond's is today, "you just get to the point the old plan is ineffective, and even modifications are not going to be very helpful," Shaw said.

After losing a legal battle in the early 1970s to merge with the overwhelmingly white Chesterfield and Henrico county school systems, the Richmond School Board named the advisory committee that in 1975 recommended an end to the cross-town busing of elementary students. The first wave of neighborhood schools was created in 1976, when 80 percent of the district's students were black.

Four more neighborhood schools were established in 1977, and the others were converted the next year.

Today, four schools receive busloads of black children from other neighborhoods, but the busing is intended to match enrollments with school capacity, to prevent overcrowding in one area while buildings are half-empty in another.

According to district figures, 13 neighborhood elementary schools gained whites — that is, became less segregated — while only 11 schools had fewer whites after the switch. In other words, there was a net gain in desegregation.

Staff photo by Raymond Gehman

Lynard Melvin (left) and Billy Wray take a test in Fran Williams' second-grade class in Mary Munford Elementary School in Richmond. Munford is beginning to lure larger numbers of white students.

The end to busing on the elementary level — junior and senior high school students are still bused across town — produced no schools in which more than half the students were white.

In Norfolk, where the enrollment is 59 percent black, a comparison of the system's neighborhood-school projections with last September's elementary enrollment figures shows that 12 elementary schools would become less segregated, or closer to a 50-50 racial balance. Eighteen schools would be more segregated. In five, the percentages would stay the same.

And in 15 of Norfolk's 35 neighborhood elementary schools, more than half the students would be white.

"What happened in Richmond did not create any predominantly white schools where some people could get better treatment," said Norman Chachkin, deputy director of the Washington-based Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law.

"The issue is not busing," Marsh, the former Richmond mayor, said during a recent trip to Norfolk. "The issue is racial segregation. The result in Norfolk under the plan will mean resegregation. That was not the case in Richmond."

While the relatively small number of white students frustrated integration in Richmond, the large number of blacks in leadership positions helped mute potential resistance to busing's end.

"To say politics is not involved, I would be lying," said Jack Gravely, executive secretary of the Virginia chapter of the NAACP. "The difference in Norfolk and Richmond in my mind is that black folks have never had political parity in Norfolk. They've always been on the outside with their noses pressed up against the political windowpane."

By the time elementary school busing ended in Richmond, Richard C. Hunter, who is black, had become superintendent, and the City Council, under Marsh, had a black majority.

Though several school administrators and Gravely recalled that the mayor had offered no resistance to the Richmond anti-busing plan, Marsh was reluctant to discuss his views.

"I'm in a little awkward position as counsel in the Norfolk case," Marsh said. "I don't want to be a witness in the case, too. The facts are what they are. I don't know my personal opinions are germane."

But the Rev. Miles Jones, who served on the Richmond School Board from 1979 to 1980, said the attitudes of black leaders are more relevent than Marsh might admit.

"The person who was leading us, Henry Marsh, was the foremost fighter in the whole struggle," Jones said. Therefore, he said, blacks could be confident that they would not be discriminated against even without busing.

"Norfolk," he said, "has never cultivated that kind of black leadership. Sharing the political power would go a long way."

Throughout their campaign to block Norfolk's neighborhood-school plan, black leaders have said they mistrust city fathers, most of whom are white. That mistrust, Gravely said, helps explain why blacks historically have pressed for desegregated schools.

But, he said, "I'm not so sure integration must be pursued educationally at all costs. Busing is not a panacea."

Although he now says that "there is nothing wrong with having a majority-black school or a majority-white system," Marsh said a dozen years ago: "You can't have quality education without complete integration. The concepts are inseparable. A segregated education does harm to both black and white children."

The Rev. Liontine T. Kelly, a black member of the Richmond School Board, is not surprised at such a turnaround.

"The thing about busing is, it's never been very popular," she said. "It was just a radical move to try to pull a community, a school system, together."

The black reaction to a neighborhood-school proposal "has to do with the whole community climate and the way people are relating," Mrs. Kelly said. She said that blacks were well-enough entrenched in Richmond's business, academic and cultural communities that they did not see busing as their only symbol of parity.

Richmond's chances of success in its bid to end busing also were increased, many observers contend, by the way the campaign was handled, particularly by the willingness of school officials to seek black support before publicly presenting their plan.

In Norfolk, Jones said, "You did too much of your stuff out in the open."

Gravely said the NAACP never officially opposed the Richmond proposal, in part because its leaders were consulted early.

"We got a copy of the plan," he said. "I talked with Dick Hunter," the black superintendent of schools.

"To this very day," Gravely said, "Dick Hunter is a member of the NAACP, and he stops in to our meetings."

That relationship is far closer than the tie between black leaders and school officials in Norfolk, Gravely said, recalling a letter he wrote last year to Thomas G. Johnson Jr., the Norfolk School Board chairman, requesting a meeting to discuss Norfolk's neighborhood-school plan. In reply, he recalled, Johnson told the NAACP that public hearings would provide an adequate forum for the group to express its views.

"There is an arrogance in Norfolk that transcends lack of respect," he said. "In Richmond, it might be the same scoop of ice cream. But in Richmond, you let me pick out the flavor and taste it before I pay for it. In Norfolk, you make me pay for it first.

"If the black community had smelled a rat, we would have fought it tooth and nail," Gravely said of the Richmond plan. "Whether we were sold a bill of goods remains to be seen."

Crain, the Johns Hopkins scholar, said the evidence is mixed on desegregation's effects.

"I don't think there's any question a black-controlled school can be as good as a white-controlled school," he said, "in teaching reading, writing and American history."

But he said several studies have suggested that black children who attend desegregated schools fare better in desegregated colleges and in the world of work than do their counterparts from schools that were virtually all-black.

"Partly," he said, "it's knowing how to act around whites. It's just not being afraid of white people."

Richmond school administrators have not tried to measure whether the elementary schools have thrived since cross-town busing ended. They say, for example, they are unable to furnish standardized achievement-test scores broken down by race. Such a breakdown would demonstrate whether busing's end has erased the historic tendency of black students to lag behind their white classmates in academic performance. Even a school-by-school compilation of scores proved to have so many gaps that it was impossible to determine trends over the last decade.

The district has not tried to assess whether teachers in poor, all-black schools are as experienced or as well-paid as those in more middle-class neighborhoods.

Officials were unable to provide individual school budgets, contending that each pupil was allocated a fixed sum. Nor did they have a breakdown of the number of texts and library books per capita in each school. Thus, it is impossible to determine whether each school receives a fair share of the district's resources.

Principals, administrators and the head of the Richmond Council of PTAs all say that parental involvement is stronger today than it was five years ago.

"PTA organizations are becoming more effective," said James W. Tyler, Richmond's deputy superintendent. "It's an indication people are taking a little more interest and pride in the schools."

But Richmond PTA membership figures, obtained through the Virgin-

ia Congress of Parents and Teachers, undermine his optimism. The figures show that membership dwindled steadily, from 7,635 in the 1970-71 school year to 2,292 in 1978-79, the year the last elementary schools switched to the neighborhood system. PTA membership rose by about 1,500 in the next two years, but fell again over the last two years to 2,665.

Figures for Norfolk disclose a similar decline in PTA membership since busing began. Citywide PTA rolls shrank from 9,038 in 1970-71 to 5,269 the next year. But membership has remained more constant than in Richmond, hovering between 5,000 and 6,000.

To some extent, the confidence that a black-run school system and city government would take care of its neighborhood elementary schools appears well-founded.

Since the council gained a black majority, Richmond has spent a larger share of its budget on schools, according to figures supplied by the city budget director, L.D. Hughes.

From 1971-72 through 1976-77, the proportion of the city's operating budget devoted to schools never exceeded 20 percent. In 1972-73, the year after busing began, the amount of money the city contributed to the schools declined by almost half a million dollars.

In March 1977, a black majority took control of the council. Since then, the percentage of the budget devoted to education has grown in every year but one. This year, the school system got 29 percent of Richmond's operating budget, while Norfolk's public schools received $52.3 million, or 22 percent, of the city's operating budget.

Although they cannot be broken down by race or school, Richmond's

Staff photo by Raymond Gehman

Lillie Ross teaches a pre-kindergarten class at Mary Munford in Richmond

citywide scores on standardized achievement tests have risen in recent years, mirroring a national trend.

In the 1981-82 academic year, the average fourth-grader earned a composite score at the 42nd percentile on a standardized achievement test called the SRA. That score, which measures a combination of reading, math and language skills, means that the average Richmond fourth-grader performed better than 41 out of 100 of his counterparts around the country who took the test.

"Everybody's test scores are going up," said Crain, of Johns Hopkins. "Richmond is to be congratulated, but so is everybody else."

Norfolk's fourth-graders that year had an average composite score at the 43rd percentile.

Average class size in Richmond's elementary schools has fallen from 25.5 in 1975-76, the year before the first reduction in cross-town busing, to 23.5 today. In Norfolk this past academic year, the average elementary school class had 27.6 students, school system figures show.

Moreover, the Richmond schools with higher proportions of white students tend to have larger classes. The most heavily black schools and those with the largest number of children who receive federally subsidized lunches (a measure of poverty) have class sizes uniformly below the citywide elementary average.

For at least some schools, the end of cross-town busing also has meant the end of the turmoil wrought by resistant white parents.

When William Bjork became principal of George Mason Elementary in Richmond eight years ago, 45 percent of the students were white. Today, all but eight of his 570 students are black. Eighty-five percent of them are poor enough to qualify for federally subsidized school lunches.

Bjork, an energetic 33-year-old with brown hair and a droopy moustache, said the absence of the white students from working-class, southside homes has been a relief.

"When the southside people were here, the advantage was the opportunity to get to know folks of a different ethnic group," said Bjork, who is white. "Just because Johnny was a different color didn't mean he couldn't play ball as well.

"But given the attitude of the parents, I'm not sure the good done overrode the negativism."

The white students "didn't want to be here, because momma didn't want 'em here," Bjork said.

"When I took kids home who missed the bus," he said, "the parents didn't appreciate it. It was always, 'Well, I didn't ask to come over there anyway with all those niggers.' "

When busing ended, children were given the option to finish their elementary years in their old schools. At Mason, none of the white students stayed. In fact, although the school system has kept no figures, administrators recall that very few children throughout the city elected to remain in school across town.

Today, Bjork said, "the community support for the school is much better, simply because they're here in the neighborhood."

But there have been limits to the success of neighborhood schools.

For one thing, white teachers have become increasingly rare, according to employee reports the school system must file annually with the federal government. The figures show that the number of white teachers has dropped by 50 percent since 1975-76, the year before the first reduction in busing.

In the last eight years, the number of black teachers has increased by three, from 483 in 1975-76 to 486. The number of white teachers has dropped from 237 to 129.

"We have tended to look for the best teachers, regardless of color," said Nathaniel Lee, assistant to the superintendent. "If a white person doesn't apply, we don't go out looking for them just because they're white."

At the same time, the number of white students has continued its long-term decline.

The influx of white children that school officials anticipated has not materialized, school system figures show. Today, just 13 percent of Richmond's students are white — eight percentage points less than in 1975-76.

"It may indicate the calculated gamble is not doing what it was intended to do," Gravely said.

But since busing's end, the rate of decrease in white enrollment has slowed, particularly at the elementary level.

Among elementary students, the racial composition has remained stable three of the last four years. Since 1978, black enrollment has swollen slightly, from 82 percent to 84 percent.

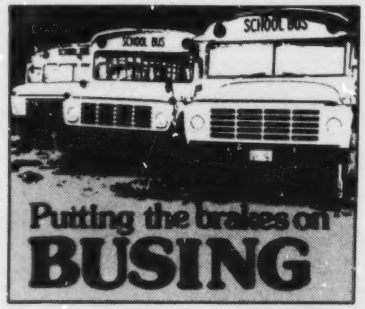
Some elementary schools, such as Mary Munford in the affluent West End, are beginning to lure increasing numbers of white children. And that gradual trend provides encouragement for Superintendent Hunter, who insists that school desegregation is not a thing of the past in Richmond.

The administration and the School Board retain their commitment to "quality integrated education," he said. "It's beneficial to have a heterogeneous population in a school system."

But Hunter also cautioned against "waving the red flags." Whether the issue is the metropolitan busing plan sought by Richmond a decade ago or the return to neighborhood schools contemplated in Norfolk today, he said, there are limits to the amount of change a school district can tolerate.

"The best thing to do is improve the quality of education," he said. "Sometimes, when you get all this hoop'a, where people have grown comfortable," white families start leaving the district again in greater numbers, he said.

"You polarize the races, and you turn the clock back," Hunter said. "And that just doesn't serve any useful purpose."



Woman works to

Staff photo by Raymond Gehman

Louise Edge has worked four years to increase community support for Mary Munford Elementary in Richmond's West End. Her children, Brannen, 5, and Laura, 8, are enrolled at the neighborhood school. Brannen (left) has completed kindergarten, and Laura has finished the third grade.

RICHMOND — For the last four years, Louise Edge has been a missionary in her own back yard.

Her prospective converts: parents of schoolchildren in Richmond's elite West End.

Her gospel: Public schools can offer as good an education as the private academies to which this upper-middle class, white community has for generations turned.

And the beneficiary of her works: Mary Munford Elementary, a tidy, brick schoolhouse in the heart of the West End, which has since the fall of 1978 been — in theory if not practice — a neighborhood school.

When the switch came, only 15 of the children enrolled at Mary Munford were white. To fill the building, the school system has carted busloads of black children from Highland Park, about a 20-minute ride away.

But, slowly, at the prodding of West Enders like Mrs. Edge, the neighborhood children are coming back. Today, 67 white children attend the school. They make up 14 percent of the 475 students.

White youngsters from the neighborhood account for more than a third of Mary Munford's kindergartners and more than half of the children in a preschool program for 4-year-olds. Jennifer Robb, the youngest child of Gov. Charles S. Robb, also attends the preschool class.

The school's principal, Russell Harris, said he viewed the higher proportion of white children in the lower

revive a neighborhood school

grades as evidence of increasing willingness by the West Enders to try the public school.

Surrounding Mary Munford is Windsor Farms — a maze of quiet, tree-shaded streets lined by stately brick houses with manicured lawns.

"It's a status symbol," Harris said. "If you live in Windsor Farms, you don't go to public schools. It goes with the turf. It's like, if you work for Ford, you don't drive a Chrysler."

The advent of cross-town busing in the early 1970s "reinforced and exaggerated" the neighborhood's longstanding tradition, Mrs. Edge said. "People got really hysterical."

Residents telephoned Harris during the installation of new playground equipment to say, "What is that mess?" Harris remembered. "They put ugly notes on my teachers' cars."

Mrs. Edge's crusade began in 1979, the year before her daughter, Laura, was to start school.

She and her husband, Jim, a certified public accountant, "were going through the process all West End parents go through — testing, applying to private schools," she said.

They decided to peek at the elementary just blocks from their home, and, she said, "We found a wonderful little school."

Eager for more information, she organized a meeting in her living room with the principal and a School Board member. And, thinking a private audience would be a waste, she invited some neighbors to attend. Of the 30 people who crowded into her living room, a handful became converts, and the Mary Munford Neighborhood Committee was born.

"We worked like little Trojans," Mrs. Edge said. "We found every phone number and every address" of West End residents, who were invited to more living room meetings.

She drew charts showing that from kindergarten through high school a private education for two children would cost a family $150,000.

The sessions were followed by a school open house.

The next fall, Laura Edge was one of 48 white children who went to the school. Harris said he tried to lump the white children in each grade in one or two classes, so they would not be the only one in their classroom.

Today, Mrs. Edge said, "I feel like this is a good place for her to be. Being in an overwhelming minority has never really affected her." The Edges' son, Brannen, attended kindergarten at Mary Munford last year.

The living room meetings and the open houses have become regular affairs. The committee also sponsors an annual Easter egg hunt.

Harris said the benefits of budding community support have been tangible.

A woman, who lives across the street from Mary Munford and whose own children are too young for school, volunteers to teach students to work with computers.

Attendance at functions of the Parent-Teachers Organization has soared. Parents have driven children on field trips to the theater, an animal farm and the state fair. Mrs. Edge sponsors a school newspaper.

She raves about the advantages of a neighborhood school. "I can come over and look in on my fish tank and eat lunch with my child," she said. "I can tell people my real estate values will go up if people perceive there is a good neighborhood school."

Troubles linger, nonetheless. "You still constantly run into, 'I didn't know the school had returned to a neighborhood system,' " Mrs. Edge said.

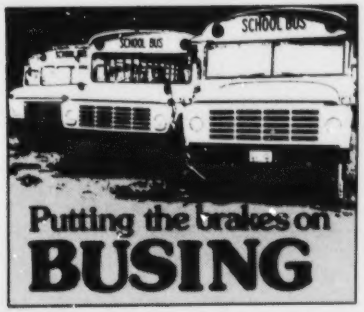
She said she originally predicted that, by the current year, half of the students would be white. Now she thinks the enrollment never will reach that level.

Both Harris and Mrs. Edge acknowledge that some of the return is a legacy of what she called "the terrible economic depression," which has made parents less able to afford private school tuition.

And some parents send their children to Mary Munford for their primary years and then transfer them to a private school.

Still, Mrs. Edge said, "more and more people are willing to just give it a look. It still is not entirely acceptable to be going here, but it is not as much a stigma as it used to be."

Denver's bout with busing still unresolved



DENVER — Years before her views became fashionable, Naomi Bradford despised cross-town busing.

A petite woman who favors ruffled blouses and gently tailored suits, her soft voice assumes an acid edge when her pet subject arises.

"As a parent, to be told, 'Your child can no longer go to the neighborhood school' is a foreign and unacceptable thought," said Mrs. Bradford, who has served on the Denver School Board for eight years. "I believe integrated schools should be promoted but not forced."

Her sentiments helped win her an appointment by the Reagan administration as the regional head of a federal agency. And a year ago, she rejoiced when her colleagues on the board approved the cause she had long championed, agreeing to send to the federal courts a plan that would end forced busing.

"It was a victory even to have it developed," Mrs. Bradford said.

But today, she said, the campaign has gone awry.

"We tried to spill our hearts and say, 'We really care, and we are not racists,' " she said. "But the judge reacted harshly, as if there were something devious up our sleeves. It's been a circus in the courts.

"I've never seen the district have a more counterproductive time. Educationally, this district has stood still."

●

Compared with many U.S. cities, what old-time Coloradans call the "overgrown cow town" at the base of the Rockies seems blessed.

Nearly two dozen gleaming skyscrapers have sprouted in Denver in the last five years, attesting to the city's economic allure. Few inhabitants boast Colorado roots that sink deeper than a generation or two.

Slums are a relative term in Denver. The typical black resident over 25 has some college education, holds a white-collar job and owns a home, according to a 1981 analysis conducted for the city by a pair of social scientists.

But the blight of segregated schools did not spare Denver. In 1974, it became the first city outside the South to face a Supreme Court desegregation order to bus children — black, white and Hispanic — across town.

Though similar orders brought resistance in other cities, "the people of this community got together," said Omar Blair, the School Board's only black member. To help ease the transition their children would have to face, "the parents from the southeast and southwest, northeast and northwest had picnics and hot dog roasts," Blair said.

Since then, Denver seems to have been more successful than most cities in erasing segregation. According to a national survey released this year by the Joint Center for Political Studies, a Washington group, Denver led all large metropolitan areas in reducing the racial isolation of black and Hispanic students during the 1970s.

Today, the school system is 40 percent white, 23 percent black and 32 percent Hispanic. In 1973, the year before busing began, the district was 57 percent white, 18 percent black and 24 percent Hispanic.

"We think white flight, if not totally stopped, has temporarily slowed," said James H. Daniels, Denver's assistant superintendent for planning and development, who oversees the desegregation program.

But documents that fill huge boxes in a federal court storeroom disclose another side of Denver's history. Between 1968 and 1980, the city lost 37,188 white students, a 59 percent decline. Enrollment in the school system fell from 87,620 in 1973 to fewer than 61,000 today.

Meanwhile, the suburbs have blossomed as immigrants from around the nation have succumbed to the enticements of sunny weather, plentiful jobs and nearby ski slopes.

Half the school-age Hispanics and three-fourths of the school-age blacks in the metropolitan area live in the city, but only one-eighth of the whites in that age group are within Denver's borders.

Such statistics disturb some school officials who blame the imbalance on forced desegregation.

"I think busing has destroyed itself," said Robert Crider, who was the School Board's president until May. "We've lost children. We've had to close schools. We're out of money because your revenue is set by your number of children.

"All the sins of the world have been visited on us because of this great social experiment."

●

In the late 1970s, the Denver School Board decided that the time had come for the court to dismiss the desegregation suit, Keyes vs. School District No. 1, that had produced the busing order. And that is when the trouble began.

After a year of meticulous work, a citizens' committee and school officials presented a desegregation plan under which each school would contain a balance of black, Hispanic and white children.

But there was a hitch: almost every child in the district would be moved to a new school.

"Oh my God, I thought the world would fall in," said Katherine Schomp, the School Board member who had led the committee. "I lost a lot of my friends over it. I couldn't go to a cocktail party without being attacked."

The embarrassed committee went back to work, drafting a plan that would limit, but not end, cross-town busing. The night the board was to vote on this proposal, however, one member, William R. Schroeder, surprised his colleagues with an open letter in which he said: "We must

guard against boundaries for any purpose. . . . If there are no boundaries, . . . then no one can say division is done for racial purposes."

Schroeder's opposition led district administrators to incorporate his ideas into still another approach, the "Total Access Plan." Under it, no student would be assigned to a school. Every child would be free to select from a broad range of special-interest schools and centers within schools.

Elementary children, for instance, could choose a Montessori school, a science-math academy or a center emphasizing foreign languages or "multicultural heritage." For high school students, the options included an institute for energy studies, a government and law career center and an institute for aerospace studies.

"The beauty of that thing is that it returns the American tradition of freedom of choice in education," said Crider, the former board president.

The School Board sent both the modified busing plan and the Total Access Plan to court. Refusing to choose between them, U.S. District Judge Richard Matsch asked the board to make up its mind.

It chose the latter. But after two weeks of hearings in March 1982, Matsch threw it out of court, ordering the board to come up with a better idea.

In November, the judge specified 10 ways in which the school district was to expand on its desegregation efforts. Included in his order were demands for hiring more minorities and eliminating any discrepancies in the use of disciplinary measures for white, black and Hispanic students. The judge also ordered the school system to work with housing, zoning and other agencies to improve Denver's neighborhood integration.

AP file photo

Gordon Greiner, the lawyer for busing supporters, terms the Denver School Board's Total Access Plan "a sugar-coated segregation plan."

And, to help the board devise an acceptable desegregation strategy, the judge appointed as advisers three authorities on the subject from around the country.

While they and the board attempt to hammer out a proposal that will satisfy the court, the system is operating under a modified busing plan similar to that recommended by the citizens' committee.

Today, disagreement lingers in Denver over the merits of the Total Access Plan.

"I thought we had a chance," said the School Board lawyer, Michael Jackson. "It had educational validity, and on its face, it appears nondiscriminatory. It was open to all."

The plaintiff's lawyer, Gordon Greiner, disagreed, terming the proposal "a sugar-coated segregation plan."

But friends and foes of busing concede that the attempt to end busing has backfired.

"Any school board that tries to circumvent the requirement for integration is asking for trouble," said Mrs. Schomp, the board member who headed the citizens' committee and who favors continued busing. "They are usually going to get more demands than they had before."

Crider said he felt betrayed.

"The best place you want to be is far away from the courts," said the former board chairman, an opponent of cross-town busing. "They start writing policy and never stop. Judges a lot of times use the bench to legislate without the benefit of an electorate."

Said another board member, Franklin Mullen, "There is a tremendous feeling the goal posts keep getting moved."

The risk of such judicial interference faces any school board re-opening the delicate question of school desegregation, according to several scholars.

"Norfolk has a last-generation order now," said Gary Orfield, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago and an expert on school desegregation. "The new orders ask for much more," he said, warning that Norfolk's board members "are opening a Pandora's box."

School officials and other Denver residents disagree over why the judge rebuffed the board.

Mrs. Bradford contended that one reason was the board's wavering, evidenced later by its refusal to appeal the judge's order.

Several board members and residents speculated that the plan might have been accorded a warmer reception if the school system's case had been presented in greater detail and by more skilled lawyers. Others suggested that the flaws lay with the plan itself and the School Board's history of court compliance.

The district included in its proposal no projections of each school's racial composition. "We don't have any historical basis for making such an estimate," said Jackson, the lawyer.

Nor were there cost estimates for the special-interest programs.

"We could do it within the existing resources with a few exceptions," Jackson said. "We had the physical facilities, and — with exception of

"At this point, I'm afraid the panel will make some rather exotic suggestions that will put us in the soup all over again. You can't keep stirring the pot."

— Katherine Schomp
school board member.

the Montessori program and a few others — there are no independent extra costs." The transportation budget could absorb the expense of busing children to the special schools, he said.

But Jackson's assertions run counter to research findings that special interest "magnet" schools — if they are to be good enough to attract racially balanced student bodies — require large sums of money. Seattle, Houston, Milwaukee and other districts that have set up many magnet schools have found them to be "pretty expensive," said Mark Smylie, director of the Education Equity Project of Vanderbilt University's Institute for Public Policy Studies.

Although some observers believe that the judge protested because Denver's plan lacked detail, others contend that he objected to the potential resegregation of schools.

The district offered no figures, but the plaintiffs came to court armed with estimates of their own, projecting the racial compositions that would result if most children went to their neighborhood schools. They also showed that some buildings probably would bulge with more students than they could hold, while others would be underused.

According to the plaintiffs' estimates, 20 of the school system's 79 elementary schools would have become more than 80 percent black or Hispanic under the proposal, while 13 would have been more than 80 percent white. In other words, 33 schools would be more than 80 percent one race, compared with three in 1981-82. In rejecting the Denver plan, Judge Matsch said the proposal did not remove "the vestiges of racial discrimination."

Under Norfolk's proposal, 11 of the district's 36 elementary schools would become more than 80 percent one race.

Still others contended that the judge balked in the face of what Blair called the "ultrapolitical" nature of the School Board. The board "is asking me and the community to accept this plan as an act of faith," Matsch said from the bench in rejecting the proposal. "But there are factors which indicate you can't go on faith."

Matsch noted that the board developed one proposal, then made "an abrupt switch" after the election of a new anti-busing majority.

AP file photo

"I think the judge has said, 'I'm not going to put my eggs in the board basket,' " said Greiner, the lawyer for busing supporters.

Matsch placed the eggs, instead, in the laps of the Compliance Assistance Panel, three academicians who specialize in school desegregation.

The result has been extreme nervousness among board members and others involved with the schools, who contend that the panel's appointment robs the school system of control over its own destiny.

"I keep reading Matsch's order, but I don't think it's clear what their role is," said Sandy Berkowitz, head of the education committee of the League of Women Voters, which has been active in the school system.

Said Mrs. Schomp: "At this point, I'm afraid the panel will make some rather exotic suggestions that will put us in the soup all over again. You can't keep stirring the pot. What do they know about this district?"

Denver has some evidence of the potential pitfalls of outside advice in its experience with a consultant hired to help draft the original busing plan in 1974.

"He didn't know the demographics, the topography," Blair said. "He had kids walking across freeways where there weren't any bridges."

So far, the proposals of the advisory panel have failed to ease the alarm.

In preliminary recommendations, the panel urged in March that the school system adopt a tri-ethnic integregation program — the very proposal that stirred such dissent a few years ago.

"If the plan you have suggested is put into effect," board member Schroeder told the panel at its one open meeting so far, "you'll practically empty the city. You'll kill it."

The panel members tried to soothe the fears. One of them, Willis D. Hawley, dean of Peabody College, Vanderbilt University's School of Education and Human Development, said: "The role of this panel is not decision-making. It is not our job as we see it to resolve the desegregation problems in Denver.

"We don't know Denver. We've never professed to. We won't draw the plan — promise.

"But that doesn't mean we won't comment on the plan."

Another consultant, Charles V. Willie, a professor in the Harvard graduate school of education, said, "All our research shows that voluntary plans do not result in a desegregated system."

Mrs. Bradford protested: "We know if we come up with a totally different plan, we'll have more children leave the system, and we're convinced most of those are Anglos. Dynamite comes in small packages, and this can prove it."

But Willie told the board: "To be able to stay out of court, you have to be able to entertain whatever groups feel they have been offended. Racial isolation has been the major issue in school desegregation cases, and, for the court to dismiss the case, it has to be convinced there is not any racial isolation."

The judge has agreed to allow the school system another year to wrangle over its desegregation plans.

Meanwhile, school officials say they worry that the prospect of more change will prompt people to shy away from public schools.

"People cannot keep up with a bunch of different plans," said Mrs. Berkowitz of the League of Women Voters. "All you feel is instability. In the neighborhood in which I live, we have had the same elementary pairing since '76. In all the plans proposed, there is only one that would change the neighborhood at all.

"Yet when you talk to anyone in my neighborhood, it is the instability of change."

"Each time we made a massive change, we had a lot of people get upset and leave," Blair said. "People don't like it when they don't know where their kids are going next year."

Parents are not the only ones uncertain about the form Denver's desegregation plans ultimately will take.

Some residents believe that the court's reaction and the appointment of the panel of experts mean that busing is permanent.

When the board submitted the anti-busing plan to court, Mrs. Berkowitz said: "The real question was, 'Can we substitute concerns for high-quality education for integration?' He basically said, 'No.' I view it as a dead plan."

Blair said the school system "was as close as we could ever have been" to moving away from court supervision — until the submission of the Total Access Plan.

And even Mrs. Bradford says the end of busing, which once seemed certain, may not come to pass, adding: "No one has a crystal ball. There are too many variables in the situation now."

The initiator of the plan, Shroeder, is more optimistic. The move away from busing "is going to happen," he said.

"It may have a different name, and it may be in a somewhat different form," he said. "But it'll come to pass."

Housing-school bargain may open an era

DENVER — A small band of Denver educators, housing authorities and civil rights officials are conspiring to strike a bargain they think may pioneer a new era in school desegregation.

The ingredients are deceptively simple: 2,300 acres of raw land in the northeastern tip of the city, a school system committed to integrated schools and a developer eager to be able to tell customers that their young children can go to school in the neighborhood.

Now the bargain: the district promises a neighborhood elementary school in Green Valley Ranch in exchange for a guarantee by the developer that the subdivision will be racially mixed.

The result is nothing short of "the nation's first housing-driven school desegregation plan," according to one of the scheme's authors, Marshall Kaplan, dean of the graduate school of public affairs of the University of Colorado at Denver.

The idea originated among three brothers who own Alpert Brothers, a 20-year-old company that is developing the last vacant parcel of land in Denver.

"It's the best solution that's come down the pike," said Lee Alpert, vice president. "If the goal is to have integrated schools, rather than bus children across town, why not have a community where kids can be integrated in their neighborhood?"

The plan is not certain to become a reality, since it has not yet received the necessary stamp of approval from the federal courts.

But the bargain's drafters, and several nationally prominent housing and desegregation authorities who have advised them, brim with hope.

"It's saying to a central city, 'We can fight white flight,' " said Kaplan, who, under the Carter administration, was the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's deputy assistant secretary for urban policy.

Kaplan says the plan may prove, as well, one of the first successful instances of collaboration between public agencies and private industry — collaboration that is in vogue today in Washington and in statehouses around the country.

"It is too bad, we didn't do it in 1954," he said. "If we did it after Brown vs. Board of Education, it would have been easier to integrate schools."

A broad social experiment? Perhaps.

But, said Gary Orfield, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, the Denver proposal also makes good business sense.

"There's a tremendous incentive for everyone to work on this," said Orfield, who is an authority on school desegregation. "From the board's perspective, it will get new schools. In terms of the pure financial interests, it will (broaden) the tax base."

As for Alpert Brothers, Kaplan said, the neighborhood elementary school will provide a valuable selling tool for home builders in the subdivision.

"We're interested in it for a lot of reasons, but the No. 1 reason is we're entrepreneurs and capitalists," Alpert said. "We believe by coming up with some creative solutions, we will have a more successful area."

Kaplan noted that the bargain struck by the school system and the developers also was intended to keep the northeastern section of Denver from becoming an all-black pocket.

Green Valley Ranch lies next to a neighborhood called Montbello. Designed in the 1960s as a planned, integrated community, Montbello at first was a success. But since then the neighborhood has acquired federally subsidized, low-income housing, and most of the white families have moved out.

Kaplan said he hoped that the Green Valley project would block "the path of black migration."

Orfield added: "If it began to go like Montbello, he (Alpert) might not be able to market it."

Denver is not the only city where educators are heeding the advice of researchers who urge that school systems work more closely with housing officials toward their common goal.

During the 12 years of Norfolk's busing for desegregation, the district occasionally has exempted elementary schools in neighborhoods that are integrated enough to produce racial balance without importing students from across town.

In other school systems around the country, the desegregation of neighborhoods and classrooms has become more formally entwined.

"If the goal is to have integrated schools, rather than bus children across town, why not have a community where kids can be integrated in their neighborhood?"

— Lee Alpert, vice president, Alpert Brothers

"What's different about Denver is they have a huge amount of land, enough space for 45,000 people and they need schools. So you have leverage."

— Gary Orfield
University of Chicago

Orfield noted, for instance, that in St. Louis a new school desegregation court order stipulates that developers who demonstrate their projects would enhance school integration will get preference in obtaining federal housing subsidies.

In recent negotiated agreements between the NAACP and the school systems in San Francisco and Memphis, the districts have pledged to work together with an assortment of housing agencies.

And in Louisville, the growing collaboration is reflected in billboards sporting the message, "Stop forced busing. Integrate your neighborhood."

"There is precedent," Kaplan said. "But we're taking it a step further.

"What's different about Denver," Orfield said, "is they have a huge amount of land, enough space for 45,000 people and they need schools. So you have leverage."

In an initial meeting this spring between Alpert Brothers and the School Board, the district officials discussed how the bargain would work.

Alpert has agreed to aim for a neighborhood in which 30 percent of the residents are Hispanic or black. Such a percentage would mean that about 40 percent of the school-age children would be members of minorities.

The bargain calls for a sliding scale, so that by the time the 30 percent is reached the neighborhood's children would be exempted from cross-town busing.

In order to secure the proper racial composition, Alpert has agreed to a host of affirmative action marketing strategies, using, for instance, minority salespeople. He has lined up a variety of builders who will sell houses and rent apartments at a range of prices broad enough to appeal to people with high and low incomes.

The developer also has agreed to build the neighborhood's elementary school and lease it to the district. The arrangement would prevent the school system from having to put up money for construction in advance.

For its part, the School Board has voted to ask the federal courts for permission to place an elementary school in Green Valley Ranch.

"You can't do it," said board member William Schroeder, an opponent of busing who is a Realtor. "We've had our civil rights, fair housing laws. All these things have come about to put an end to steering.

"If I push 'em into Green Valley, that's steering, and that's what we're being asked to do. You can't set up quotas.

"If you cut this down to its finest point, that's what they're trying to do. They're counting noses."

But another board member, Katherine Schomp, said, "If this guy can put together a really positive plan, I'm really hopeful about it."

Leaders differ widely on future of Norfolk busing

NORFOLK — Would Norfolk consider seeking a metropolitan busing plan, one that would mix its schoolchildren with those from predominantly white Virginia Beach and Chesapeake?

Mayor Vincent J. Thomas says yes, if the city's school system becomes increasingly black.

But the School Board chairman, Thomas G. Johnson Jr., and a busing advocate, King E. Davis, say no. Trying to implement a regional exchange would be a political and legal nightmare, they say.

Can all-black schools in poor Norfolk neighborhoods succeed?

Johnson thinks so, because the city is prepared to spend the money necessary to make such schools work.

Davis, however, answers with an emphatic no, and Thomas acknowledges that schools in low-income black neighborhoods have inherent disadvantages.

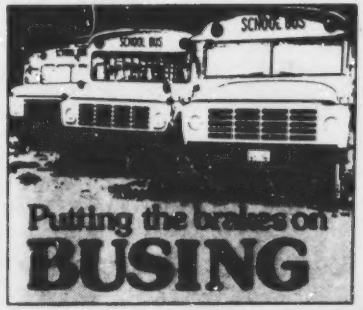
To remedy the problem, the mayor said, the School Board might consider closing elementary schools in poor black neighborhoods and transferring the children who live there to schools in more prosperous parts of the city.

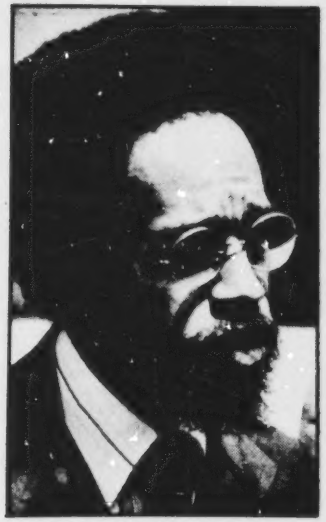
Those divergent sentiments emerged from interviews with three key figures in the Norfolk busing debate. They were asked to assess the implications of issues that arose from efforts to reduce cross-town busing in Little Rock, Richmond and Denver.

Thomas was School Board chairman a decade ago, when cross-town busing began in Norfolk. He is a longtime opponent of busing for desegregation, although the City Council he leads has, until recently, refused publicly to intervene in the school district's struggle for neighborhood schools. In the last few months, Thomas has stepped delicately into the debate, holding meetings with black leaders to discuss race relations.

Johnson, a lawyer and a political ally of the mayor's, has provided much of the impetus for the School Board's campaign. The board began to consider a return to neighborhood elementary schools soon after he became chairman in 1981.

Davis, a professor of social work at Norfolk State University, has been, perhaps, the most articulate critic of the board's efforts. He is a leader of the Coalition for Quality Public Education, a group formed in the fall of 1981 to help preserve the city's busing plan and the desegregation it promotes.





KING E. DAVIS . . .
. . . wary of busing changes

The leaders expressed conflicting opinions about a metropolitan busing plan, favored by many desegregation authorities as a way to neutralize the flight of whites to the suburbs.

In practice, regional approaches often have been received coolly by the federal courts. Richmond's public schools, for example, tried a decade ago to merge with neighboring Henrico and Chesterfield counties, but the effort was blocked by the U.S. Supreme Court.

More recently, the Little Rock School Board has filed suit against surrounding Pulaski County and the state of Arkansas in an attempt to get a city-suburb busing program.

In Tidewater, such an effort may be worth contemplating, Thomas said.

"We used to have a dual school system," the mayor said. "That is being replaced by a racially identifiable white system in Virginia Beach and a racially identifiable black system in Norfolk. We've shifted people around, but we still have a dual system."

Thomas said he believed that the U.S. Supreme Court was unjust in using the desegregation plan in Charlotte-Mecklenberg, N.C., as the test case that set a precedent for cross-town busing programs around the nation. That district, he said, encompasses the city and surrounding suburbs, thus providing a steady supply of white students that most city-only school systems do not have.

"I think the courts put a burden on central cities when they applied Charlotte-Mecklenberg to us and then didn't bring along the suburbs in a metropolitan plan," Thomas said. "Before I would see our system go all-black like Richmond, I would want the people of Norfolk to consider whether they would want to get a metropolitan plan."

But Davis termed that prospect "a political nightmare."

"It would be horrendous in terms of getting people in Virginia Beach to go along with it," he said. "We can't even talk about sharing water. Until there is much more regional cooperation, I'm not sure that is where we start."

And Johnson, an attorney, said that after studying the legal record, he had "decided the metropolitan route was not a feasible alternative" because "it was not the direction the courts were going in."

The leaders were also divided over whether all-black elementary schools in Norfolk would be as neglected as Little Rock's Carver Elementary School. Teachers and administrators say Carver is riddled with problems, such as an unenthusiastic faculty, a substandard building and unruly students who lag academically.

Many educators think that schools in low-income areas tend to have more problems than others and that students from poor families are more difficult to teach. Norfolk's plan to curtail busing would result in three entirely black schools — Bowling Park, Tidewater Park and Young Park — all of them near low-income public-housing projects.

Thomas has proposed that the school system consider closing such schools if Norfolk's enrollment continues to decline, as expected. The location of those schools and the backgrounds of their students, he said, would make success difficult.

"It is a social-class thing more than a racial thing," he said, adding that attending school in a different neighborhood "would expand the horizon of the project children."

But Johnson insisted that schools in low-income areas would be at least as good as those in more affluent parts of the city. He said the school system would lavish attention on those schools through initiatives such as a program teaching parents to help children improve academically.

He said the district already had demonstrated its good will by establishing pre-kindergarten programs only in schools in poor neighborhoods.

"The fact of the matter is," Johnson said, "far from being deprived, if we wind up with neighborhood schools that are all-black, they would be models people from around the country would come look at to see why they are a success."

THOMAS G. JOHNSON JR. . . .
. . . remains optimistic

Davis, however, said that "schools for poor kids are often poor schools."

"It would be very difficult to protect against that," he said. "If you are honest, you have to recognize there are persons within the city who, because of their income, are not as likely to get educational quality."

The School Board has issued nothing more tangible than "verbal guarantees of no substance" to assure that low-income students "get the best education possible," Davis said.

Both Thomas and Davis predicted that the federal judge who hears Norfolk's neighborhood schools petition might tighten the reins on the school system.

Other districts have found that

neighborhood school plans have elicited a host of judicial orders, including demands for changes in bus lines, more minority employees and measures to enhance housing integregation. In Denver, many School Board members think the effort to end busing has backfired because it has produced a wave of court orders.

"Maybe Denver is a prototype that may be reflected in the city of Norfolk," Davis said.

He noted discrepencies between blacks and whites in such things as standardized test scores, dropout rates, suspensions, expulsions and participation in special education.

"It would seem to me a court could require some exploration of those areas," he said.

But Thomas indicated that a judge's suggestions might be welcome.

"The courts are like all of us who want to have schools successfully integregated," the mayor said. ' I don't know what demands he might make, but anything that would help bring the total community in harmony with the school system we would welcome."

Johnson contended, however, that, although a judge has discretion to take greater control over the school system, Norfolk's history of compliance in desegregating makes such intervention unlikely.

"I don't think the court would want to get into the detailed operation of the school system," he said. "I don't see that kind of judicial activism, given the good-faith effort of the Norfolk school system."

Unlike Davis, Thomas and Johnson said they believed that an end to elementary school busing would halt Norfolk's steady loss of white students.

Since cross-town busing began in 1971, the district's black enrollment has grown from 41 percent to 59 percent. In a study of desegregation's effects on Norfolk, David J. Armor, a sociologist, predicted that if busing persisted, the number of white children would drop from 13,154 to fewer than 10,000 by 1987. In contrast, he forecast that if Norfolk switched to neighborhood elementary schools, the district would have 17,500 white students by 1987.

"The tool that is supposed to be pro-integration is counterproductive," Johnson said, calling busing "an artificial stimulus" to white flight. A change to a neighborhood attendance system "is more likely to lead middle-class people to join our schools," he said.

The mayor agreed but suggested that "a stabilization" of the school population would happen slowly.

"I wouldn't look for there to be a great influx now," he said. "It would be a gradual kind of thing."

But Davis said he does not believe that busing has been the primary cause of the exodus of whites.

"White flight started in 1940," he said. "Busing didn't start until 1971. I'm not saying busing is not a factor. But I can't say it is the primary one."

Noting that busing meant significant integration, Davis suggested that some whites may have fled Norfolk to avoid not only cross-town busing but also contact with blacks. He said that some children who live in zones where they could attend integrated neighborhood schools are sent by their parents to all-white private academies.

Thomas, Johnson and Davis all argued that a school system is strengthened by the presence of different races and economic groups.

In Little Rock and Denver, the move to end busing was, in part, an effort to make the schools more attractive to whites. But black leaders in Richmond and educators in the city's public schools, which are 86 percent black, contend that it is more important to worry about the quality of education than the number of whites in the classroom.

Thomas disagreed:

"The disaffection of the middle class from urban public schools is going to bring long-range bad results. From a political standpoint, you've got to have people supporting the schools who will pay the freight and furnish the resources. We ought to be working to recapture their support.

"The cities that survive and prosper will do so based on their brainpower. If you start with the idea (that) schools are our most important public institution, public participation is the bedrock."

Saying that "there is nothing wrong with an all-black system," Johnson quickly added: "I think a desegregated system is a positive value. That is so basic it does not need any explanation. If you set out with your goal to be a desegregated system, you should not continue a policy that appears counterproductive."

On the other hand, Davis said the board's neighborhood school plan is an artificial source of segregation.

"We will not countenance segregated schools precipitated by the policies of the board," he said. "The deciding factor is whether it is one race by the deliberate acts of government.

"If all the blacks left the system, the schools would be all-white, but they would not be segregated," Davis said. "If all the whites left the system, they would be all-black, but they would not be segregated.

"If the School Board says, 'There is no busing,' and those schools became all-black in the projects and all-white in Ocean View, the schools would be segregated."

Thomas, Davis and Johnson also disagreed over whether the increase in the number of blacks who recently have attained leadership positions in Norfolk reflects an attempt to ease black mistrust of the mostly white School Board.

Richmond residents say the presence of a black school superintendent, mayor and city council majority minimized opposition to the switch to neighborhood elementary schools. In the last year and a half, Norfolk has acquired its first black sheriff, David Mapp; its first black vice mayor, the Rev. Joseph N. Green; its third black School Board

"The fact of the matter is, far from being deprived, if we wind up with neighborhood schools that are all-black, they would be models people from around the country would come look at to see why they are a success."

— Thomas G. Johnson Jr. School Board chairman

member, Lucy R. Wilson; its first black assistant city manager, George Crawley; and its first black school superintendent, Gene Carter.

Another black, Del. William P. Robinson Jr., who in 1981 succeeded his late father as a Norfolk representative in the General Assembly, has proved to be more ardent than his father in his advocacy of black causes.

Said Thomas: "I think the whites in Norfolk were a little taken aback on the trust issue. We thought we deserved a little better than that."

The greater number of key positions held by blacks "was some response on the part of the white leadership to address" the issue of mistrust, the mayor said.

"As long as change can be made that puts well-qualified blacks in leadership positions," he said, "I have no problem with that."

But Davis argued that black suspicions arose not from a numerical tally but from specific School Board actions.

"I don't think it's the mere fact of whites' occupying positions that, ergo, says 'mistrust,' " he said. "It's not because of the race of the board members but their activity.

"I don't know whether the presence of David Mapp, George Crawley, Billy Robinson, Dr. Carter makes a difference in terms of the comfort levels black people feel about being represented. It probably does, but I don't think the four of them together make people feel comfortable with the actions of the board that are taking place. The board has a very serious credibility problem."

Johnson said, however, that the influx of blacks into leadership positions was unrelated to the neighborhood schools campaign.

"It would have taken place anyway," he said. "It's just the maturation of the political process in the city."

The School Board head said that the appointment of Carter as the system's top administrator should not be singled out.

"It is in keeping with the good-faith tradition of the Norfolk school system," Johnson said.

Perhaps the most vehement clash emerging from the interviews concerned the prospects that the courts will approve Norfolk's neighborhood schools plan.

Thomas took a moderate position, saying: "I have generally negative feelings about the ability of the court to settle our problems. I don't think either side will get everything they want. I've been in enough court cases to know I'm less confident every time I go into one."

But, he said, "A court is a place where everyone can put forward his position and have it listened to. It would seem, rather than tear ourselves apart, we want to find out what the School Board's prerogatives are."

Davis argued, however, that the School Board has "very little" hope of success.

"The neighborhood school plan promotes schools that are segregated by deliberate policy of the board," he said. "According to the Supreme Court, segregated schools are inherently unequal. It seems to me the only way for Norfolk to go is to change its neighborhood configuration or to keep busing."

On the other hand, Johnson, asked whether he thought the plan he initiated will win court approval, replied: "Good gosh, yes. I'd hate to think we went through all this effort and didn't have a good shot at it.

"If you look back at Charlotte-Mecklenberg, the court said busing is an interim remedy," he said. "The language recognizes it is an extraordinary remedy. The next paragraph said it is within the prerogative of a school system to adopt a neighborhood plan that is based on sound educational concerns.

"I think if a school system is truly desegregated, unitary, it should be able to adopt an organization it thinks is sound. I think the courts will come to that view."

Norfolk desegregation chronology

1956 — Leola P. Beckett vs. the Norfolk School Board, filed in U.S. District Court.

Fall 1970 — Limited cross-town busing begins.

Fall 1971 — Citywide cross-town busing begins.

1975 — Without objection from the plaintiffs, the NAACP or the U.S. Justice Department, U.S. District Judge John A. MacKenzie dismisses the case and declares the school system "unitary."

September 1981 — Under then-new Chairman Thomas G. Johnson Jr., the School Board holds closed meeting to discuss possible return to neighborhood elementary schools.

February 1983 — The School Board votes, 5-2, to adopt neighborhood-schools proposal and agrees to submit the plan for court review before putting it into effect.

April 1983 — The School Board files legal actions in U.S. District Court to obtain hearing on neighborhood schools plan.

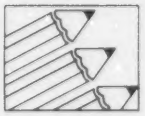
May 1983 — After protest from black busing supporters, the School Board drops suit against black residents and their children but leaves standing a motion to reopen the 1956 case.

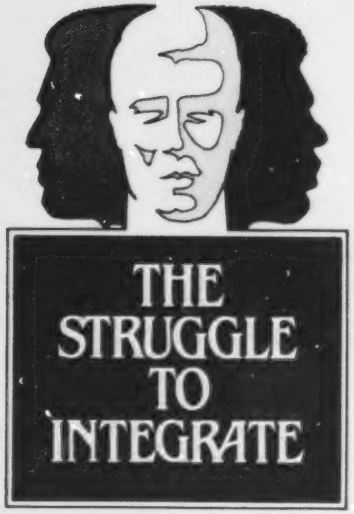
May 1983 — Busing supporters file suit against the School Board seeking to block neighborhood schools plan.

May 1983 — MacKenzie sets trial for Feb. 6, 1984.

The Fresno Bee
Fresno, California

The Struggle for Integration

A Four-Part Series  *By Jacalyn Golston*



"To separate children . . . because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority . . . that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."
— Brown vs. Board of Education, Topeka, Kan., 1954.

Segregation grows as debates rage on

Nearly 30 years after the Supreme Court's landmark desegregation decision in Brown vs. Board of Education, many of the nation's schools remain segregated.

The hearts and minds of millions of children still are being affected. The issue is far from settled.

Political and emotional resistance to school desegregation, especially forced busing programs, still runs deep in many places. Even in cities that apparently have accepted integration — San Diego, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco — interviews with school and community leaders reveal strains of opposition to philosophical and logistical aspects of desegregation.

Some people question the need to integrate schools at all. Others believe integration is beneficial but not practical. Still others contend integration is essential to a healthy, harmonious society.

And while debate rages on, segregation actually is increasing, especially in large cities where the number of minority children is greatest, says a recent report by Gary Orfield, an authority on desegregation.

Black segregation is growing most notably in the Northeast, and Hispanic segregation is increasing nationwide, Orfield's study indicates.

The South — former bastion of legal segregation — is the only region showing a decrease in racial isolation in schools. After two decades of federal intervention, more and more Southern schools are becoming racially balanced.

Elsewhere, segregation is growing, and many school districts, including Fresno's, are turning to voluntary integration plans.

Optional participation methods are more palatable to many educators and politicians. They often are adopted by school districts attempting to dismantle forced busing programs.

Yet studies have shown overwhelmingly that voluntary programs do not desegregate schools.

During desegregation hearings in 1981, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights found that "busing achieves a degree of desegregation that is unattainable through other means."

But some examples of the trend away from mandatory programs include:

• Denver — A federal district court last spring approved a plan that, for a year, reduced the number of children bused for desegregation. The district had requested a new desegregation plan based on

About the Author

JACALYN GOLSTON has worked for *The Fresno Bee* since 1973 as a feature writer, general assignment reporter and education reporter.

She has been The Bee's education writer for nearly three years and for the past two years won the California John Swett Award for contribution to education by an individual from a newspaper with 100,000 or more circulation. Golston graduated from California State University, Fresno, in 1978 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism.

At the time Golston started reporting education issues, school desegregation was once again becoming a dominant issue in Fresno and elsewhere across the country. During her fellowship research, she visited a number of school districts along the west coast and interviewed school desegregation experts nationwide.

neighborhood schools and a freedom of choice policy.

• Norfolk, Va. — The School Board is returning to court in a bid to oust a mandatory program for elementary schools and replace it with a neighborhood schools policy.

• East Baton Rouge, La. — The school district and U.S. Justice Department argued before a federal judge that a mandatory plan should be replaced by a voluntary one. The suit was dropped after the School Board rejected the Justice Department's plan.

• Nashville, Tenn. — A federal appeals court required the expansion of mandatory busing for desegregtion and the school district, with a friend-of-the-court brief from the U.S. Justice Department, appealed to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

• Chicago — The Justice Department approved a desegregation plan that excludes busing and relies heavily on a voluntary student-transfer policy.

• Prince George's County, Md. — The court is determining whether the school system violated a 1972 court order when it reduced busing levels in 1980.

• Los Angeles — A mandatory program was dropped after a statewide anti-busing initiative was found constitutional by the state Supreme Court. A voluntary program replaced it.

• San Francisco — Mandatory busing was cut back years ago and resulted in a new segregation lawsuit in 1978. The school district

Fresno Bee/Carl Crawford

Kindergartners don't seem to notice their racial differences at Aynesworth School.

and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People recently negotiated a settlement that includes a more extensive voluntary program.

• Fresno — The city school system is moving toward a voluntary program based on magnet schools while maintaining mandatory busing until the same level of integration is reached.

In cities where mandatory busing has been tried and supported by local leaders — Columbus and Dayton, Ohio; Charlotte, N.C.; Detroit; and Buffalo, N.Y. — many residents perferred it. Most studies show minority students' academic achievement improved and housing integration accelerated.

A 1981 Harris poll found that a majority of families that had experienced busing for desegregation supported it. Some 54 percent said the experience was very satisfactory; 33 percent said it was partially satisfactory; and 11 percent said it was not satisfactory.

Opinion polls surveying families that have not experienced mandatory programs generally show the majority oppose forced busing but favor integration.

"The extent to which desegregation goes well or with difficulty depends on the quality of local school leadership," says Thomas Atkins, general council for the NAACP. "Where school officials have undertaken to implement court orders in a lawful manner, school desegregation has gone smoothly.

"Where school officials have led the resistance, there has been turmoil — Boston, Cleveland, Los Angeles."

In large cities where school officials and community leaders strongly resist mandatory busing programs, the fact that busing can work is obscured by the conflict and busing then can appear ineffective and disruptive, says Orfield.

That perception also has been enhanced by strong foes of forced busing — most notably President Reagan and members of his administration.

"I remain unconvinced that forced busing is the best means of desegregating a public school system that is crying out for attention to education needs, not transportation needs," said Assistant Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds, the administration's chief enforcer of civil rights.

"And, I am unpersuaded that we move society very far down the road toward the ideal of colorblindness by insisting on race-conscious hiring and firing practices in the workforce simply to show a more perfect balance among black and white employees."

Reynolds said the Reagan administration believes desegregation can be achieved voluntarily.

In a prepared statement, Reynolds said:

"After more than a decade of court-ordered busing, the evidence is overwhelming that the effort to desegregate through wholesale reliance on race-conscious student assignment plans has failed.

"The destruction to public education wrought by mandatory busing is evident in city after city. Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Wilmington, Memphis, Denver and Los Angeles are but a few of the larger and thus more-celebrated examples.

"Nor is it difficult to understand why. The flight from urban public schools contributes to the erosion of the municipal tax base which in turn has a direct bearing on the growing inability of many school systems to provide a quality public education to their students — whether black or white.

"Similarly, the loss of parental support and involvement — which often comes with the abandonment of the neighborhood school policy — has robbed many public school systems of a critical component of successful educational programs.

"As a consequence, the promise of Brown vs. Board of Education remains unfulfilled."

The nation has never really embraced school integration.

Earlier administrations under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford denounced busing for desegregation. And Congress, in every session since 1968, has passed anti-busing legislation restricting use of mandatory busing to remedy school segregation.

But the Reagan administration is going farther. It is trying to reverse any headway, says Meyer Weinberg, a historian and author of several books on desegregation and minority education.

"But it isn't as though advocates of integration fell from grace," says Weinberg. "It's never been terribly better. Those are fairy tales about the good ol' days in the 1960s."

Orfield stresses that previous administrations offered alternatives to mandatory desegregation. Under the Nixon administration, there was the Emergency School Aid Act to fund voluntary integration efforts. Policies to improve housing integration also won support.

"There are no concrete alternatives proposed from this administration," Orfield says. "Any reasonably intelligent judge knows in half an hour that the Reagan administration is not proposing any real alternative and is not willing to pay for anything. They are just proposing to send people back to segregated schools."

Most agree that segregated housing patterns are the primary cause of school segregation in most communities. Therefore, eliminating segregated housing should, ideally, eliminate segregated schools.

But political realities of integrating neighborhoods often bury idealism. Thus, residential segregation also is increasing, according to Diana Pearce of the Center for National Policy Review at the Catholic University of America School of Law.

But courts are fighting back by writing special housing provisions into school desegregation orders throughout the country. The orders range from exempting integrated neighborhoods from busing programs to directing city, state and federal governments to administer federal housing programs in ways that will support integrated schools.

In the past, court efforts generally focused on plans involving only the schools:

- Mandatory busing — generally the most visible and controversial method of desegregation and often spurring white flight.
- Voluntary programs — usually more popular but less effective than other methods.
- Mandatory programs with voluntary backups — sometimes successful in both integrating schools and allowing parents some choice. Some still experience white flight and controversy.
- Metropolitan plans — involving both the central city and the suburbs in mandatory busing, thereby eliminating white flight to the suburbs. Many consider this method the most effective way to desegregate schools.

Metropolitan plans are widely used in the South, the region showing the greatest success in integrating its schools. That method works there because school district boundaries often cover entire counties. Districts elsewhere usually cover either city or suburban areas, not both.

Some judges are ordering city and suburban districts to cooperate in desegregating schools. In St. Louis, the court recently ordered a voluntary plan that involves busing students across city school boundaries into 23 surrounding suburban districts.

Most metropolitan plans are court ordered in an effort to thwart white flight from central cities. That issue is central to any debate on effectiveness of desegregation programs.

David Armour, who has testified in several court cases nationwide, contends that white flight is a major reason schools are not integrated.

"The evidence overwhelmingly shows that white flight leads to long-term resegregation," says Armour. "Lack of support for [forced busing] ultimately undoes the program.

"We ought to abandon mandatory programs because of the tremendous political and social costs and the tremendous white flight. Desegregation should be viewed like athletics — as something we offer because we want our children to have interracial experiences. It should not be the main focus of resources and debate in a community."

But Orfield wonders just how much of a link there is between desegregation and white flight. He argues that demographic changes in urban areas are due primarily to birth rate declines among whites and the suburbanization process that has been occurring for decades.

He points out that large cities with totally voluntary programs such as Houston and San Diego also had significant declines in the white student population.

Whatever the reason, the majority of the 50 largest school districts in the country now are at least 50 percent non-white. As the white population declines in central cities, there is less chance for integration unless surrounding, predominantly white suburbs are included in desegregation plans, experts say.

Mary Berry and other civil rights leaders maintain that school desegregation must become a national priority or non-white children will never achieve equality.

"It's important for student achievement, for exposure to different people, for awareness in the black community, and because there is a constitutional requirement to treat people equally," said Berry, a member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and a former assistant secretary of education in the Carter administration.

"The trends in the schools generally foretell trends in the cities as a whole and in the labor force and electorate," says Orfield's report on increasing school segregation. "The trends show that race relations will be a central issue in tomorrow's cities of unprecedented racial diversity and separation."

Kenneth Clark, psychologist, author and expert witness in the 1954 Brown case, says: "Educators are eloquently silent. And churches have become part of the maintenance of segregation by setting up academies for families seeking to avoid desegregation in the public schools.

"Educators have not raised their voices to point out that segregation comes in conflict with education. It

Fresno Bee

Students board a bus near Bullard Avenue on their way to classes at Edison High School.

does damage to whites and to blacks. It's a tragedy.

"Segregated public schools are a clear indication of our social, institutional support and perpetration of racism. One of the responsibilities of educators is to protect us from ignorance, and racism is a form of ignorance."

Arnold Torres, executive director of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), says the battle against segregation must be intensified within the Hispanic community. Hispanic children are rapidly becoming the most segregated group in parts of the country, he says.

"It's as important to us as being concerned where the next meal comes from," Torres says. "If these kids go through the educational process segregated, there's clearly going to be serious problems for the Hispanic community in the United States. It's imperative we do something to arrest this growing pattern of segregation."

Not all minority group leaders and experts agree. Many say that separate-but-equal education is a more practical approach to helping non-white students and schools.

Robert Carter, a federal district judge in New York and former NAACP lawyer, wrote in the Harvard Civil Rights — Civil Liberties Law Review that equal educational opportunity, even without integration, satisfies the Supreme Court's ruling in the Brown case.

"The immediate and urgent need of the black urban poor is the attainment, in real terms and in settings of virtually total black-white school separation, of at least some of the benefits and protection of the constituional guarantee of equal educational opportunity that Brown requires."

However, Atkins of the NAACP in New York rejects the separate-but-equal position because of the political reality of a white power structure in American society.

"When the Boston desegregation order was to go into effect in 1974, an amazing thing happened," he recalled. "The same school officials who argued for over a decade that the schools were of equal quality faced the reality that white children would be reassigned to schools located in black neighborhoods.

"They began scurrying around with carpenters and painters. All of a sudden, the schools had seats. Schools that had problems finding chalk started getting boxes of supplies.

"Without a question, that happens every time a desegregation order comes down."

Another important benefit of desegregation is that in an integrated setting, non-white students learn how to function in the white world, others argue.

A study done by James McPartland for the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University compared black students in segregated schools to those in desegregated schools. He found that those in desegregated schools had a more positive outlook on career opportunities and later pursued careers other than those traditionally held by blacks; had higher education goals and accomplishments; attended white rather than black colleges; and experienced greater social mobility later in life.

"Present-day student experiences in desegregated schools lay the foundation for a natural reduction of segregation in adult life and in future generations," he said.

Berry, Clark and other civil rights leaders stress that society should not reject school desegregation just because it is difficult to achieve.

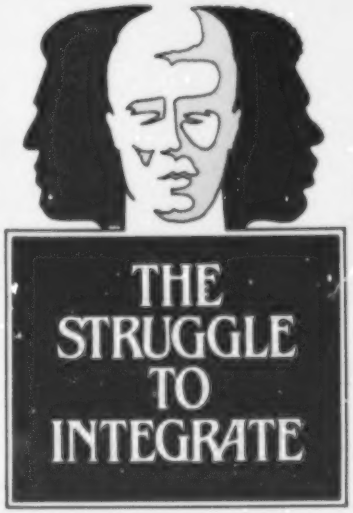
"The highest form of life, in terms of evolutionary development, involves the struggling for such abstractions as justice and decency," Clark wrote in The New Yorker. "And always there has been a minority of human beings engaged in that kind of struggle — people who won't give up when everything seems to indicate they should . . .

"In the 1960s, the struggle was so much more clear-cut. You could see the dogs and the hoses on television. It was not unlike the newsreels from Germany showing the storm troopers forcing Jews to scrub the sidewalks. And the Times would put pictures of the civil rights demonstrators in the South on the front page.

"They'd also be on the network news. So people got immediate, visceral reactions to visible atrocities. But that's not what we're dealing with now.

"These years, children are being destroyed silently in the first and second grades."

FUSD's voluntary integration plan a failure elsewhere



Fresno Unified School District is embarking on a path it hopes will lead to voluntary integration of its schools. But it's chosen a method that's already failed in many districts.

Political and social scientists cite overwhelming evidence that voluntary programs do not effectively integrate school systems.

And an examination of other districts from Seattle to San Diego seems to confirm that mandatory plans fare better.

Desegregation experts agree that the most effective mandatory method is a metropolitan plan, including both central city and suburban schools. In Fresno, such a plan might include Clovis, the Central Union High School area and Sanger.

Metropolitan plans mitigate the argument that forced busing causes white families to flee the school system, because suburban schools to which the white flight is directed also would be involved in the integration efforts.

The least effective method, studies indicate, is a voluntary program based only on magnet schools.

Next fall, the Fresno district will open two magnet schools in its first step toward a voluntary program.

Fresno Bee/Carl Crawford

Lee Xiong and Alisha Williamson play Chinese jump rope.

Meanwhile, FUSD's 5-year-old mandatory busing program will continue until the same level of desegregation is reached voluntarily.

Superintendent John Stremple claims the switch actually will increase the level of integration. He explained that a voluntary plan can be used to desegregate elementary schools — something the current mandatory program cannot do.

The mandatory program requires minimal amounts of busing at the secondary school level and none at the elementary level. Only 3 percent of the district's nearly 50,000 students are bused for desegregation.

About 700 ninth-graders are bused to racially balance Edison and Roosevelt high schools. And another 700 eighth- and ninth-graders are transferred to other schools outside their neighborhoods.

Under threat of a court order, FUSD implemented the plan in 1978 after signing an agreement with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

During the 1970s, that office and the U.S. Justice Department investigated Edison and several west Fresno elementary schools. They considered Edison illegally and intentionally segregated because FUSD rebuilt the school in 1973 and "reasonably should have known" it would be segregated.

Although the Supreme Court has ruled segregated schools illegal, the 1964 Civil Rights Act allows legal action against a district only when the segregation is intentional.

Thus, federal guidelines required FUSD to desegregate only Edison High and any other school it opens in a predominantly minority neighborhood. But some believe the district is obligated morally to comply with the intent of the law and eliminate all segregated schools.

The move toward a voluntary plan has sparked controversy.

"Fresno school officials are violating the law by engaging in a new activity that will segregate the schools," said Mary Berry, a member of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and a former assistant secretary of education in the Carter administration. "All studies indicate that voluntary programs, by themselves, do not desegregate school districts."

Under federal guidelines, Fresno has 17 elementary schools and three secondary schools that could be considered segregated. The guidelines allow a school's percentage of minority students to range 15 percent above or below the percentage of non-white students in the district.

FUSD is about 51 percent non-white, so the acceptable range for Fresno schools is 36-66 percent non-white.

What does FUSD hope to accomplish with the voluntary program? Districtwide desegregation or a balanced Edison High?

If the goal is to integrate Edison through use of the magnet school scheduled to open there in the fall, FUSD probably will succeed, judging from the experience of other

districts.

Early enrollment figures for the Fresno Academy of Computer Technology, which will share the Edison campus, indicate the specialty school will achieve the same level of integration as the forced busing to the high school.

But if the goal is to integrate the whole district, odds are it won't work voluntarily, other districts have found.

Stremple said his goal is to increase integration districtwide, and he said it is possible given the nature and size of the community.

"I'm not certain we could get total integration through a voluntary system, but I believe we can do better than we're presently doing," Stremple said. "People often are unwilling to move voluntarily to any school, but they will move more for a magnet school. And that movement will provide more integration than we presently have.

"When you compare Fresno to other major cities there is more a sense of community here. There is an absence of significant fear and bias. That will contribute to people's willingness to integrate."

But the experts probably would be skeptical.

Mark Smylie of the Educational Equity Project at Vanderbilt University — a research agency under contract with the U.S. Department of Education — recently completed a study of 49 schools districts. The study found that mandatory programs achieve four times the level of integration that voluntary plans do.

The study indicated that, on an average, districtwide mandatory plans balanced 85 percent of the segregated schools, while voluntary programs balanced 2 percent.

Preliminary findings of a study by two research firms — James H. Lowry Associates in Washington, D.C., and ABT Associates in Cambridge, Mass. — indicated that voluntary plans using magnet schools do not desegregate school districts.

Rolf Blank, head of the magnet school study for the Department of Education's Office for Planning and Evaluation, said the two-year study of 21 school districts will be completed within a few months. Its early findings included:

- Magnet schools are generally more integrated than other schools in the district.
- Magnets are positive educational experiences for a limited number of students.
- Magnets generally have a better learning environment and have more motivated students and staff members than other schools.

A study done three years ago by ABT Associates for the U.S. Department of Education's Emergency School Aid Act Magnet School Program had some of the same results:

- Magnet schools accomplish only a limited amount of desegregation but can be effective as part of a districtwide desegregation plan based on other methods.
- Magnets are more effective when used in districts with less than 35 percent non-white students.

Chang Ly gets a pat of approval on the head from

Fresno Bee/Carl Crawford

the teacher of a multiracial class at Aynesworth School in Fresno.

• Magnets are not effective as the primary or solitary means of desegregation.

• Magnets have a positive effect on attitudes toward desegregation.

"They are one tool in the tool kit," said Catherine Baltzell, one of the authors of the ABT study. "When magnets are coupled with mandatory techniques, they can be an effective tool, but when you rely solely on magnets, they are not effective at the district level.

"If a community is truly committed to make it work, you can have astonishing success," she added. "But that sort of commitment is rare."

In Seattle, school officials found a great deal of support for magnet schools. But that commitment is due primarily to Seattle's mandatory plan. Children can attend the magnet school of their choice or else they are bused to assigned schools.

Dave Moberly, the former school superintendent who implemented Seattle's desegregation plan, said magnet schools are educationally sound but they do not desegregate school districts.

"Magnets probably are a way to make urban education different and more desirable than suburban districts, but they will not desegregate a school district. They will help, but they will not do the job," said Moberly, who tried a voluntary program before switching to a mandatory busing plan in Seattle.

"Voluntary programs get you off the hook with the community, but they are not a real response to

segregation," said Wayne Foley, Seattle's desegregation program coordinator. "It's a response to the politics."

The Los Angeles Unified School District responded to community pressure and a statewide initiative that restricts forced busing. After the anti-busing initiative was found constitutional, the L.A. district dismantled its mandatory program.

The district still operates a voluntary magnet school program and about 45,000 of L.A. Unified's 550,000 students are bused to magnet schools. But more than 300,000 minority students attend racially segregated schools.

But the experts disagree even in Los Angeles' case.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's Legal Defense Fund has filed suit in federal court against the L.A. district.

"Things are better in L.A. [because of the magnet program], but they are separate and they are not equal and even when they get [minority schools] up to being equal, they still won't be desegregated," said Judy James, chairwoman of the district's monitoring committee during the traumatic years the district was under court order to desegregate. "There still will be kids believing they are not valuable because no white kids will come to their school."

In contrast, David Armour, a desegregation expert who studied the L.A. plan, said voluntary approaches are the only practical way to desegregate because mandatory plans result in loss of white students.

Armour said that the L.A. district lost about 40,000 students because of the controversy over court-ordered busing.

"You can't successfully have a program with the majority of people in opposition to it," he said. "The average parents in surveys I have conducted would like to have their child exposed to different races or groups but not at the cost of busing across town. They won't support those programs.

"It's time to put less focus on racial balance and forced busing and support programs that will work and have the support of the community."

And Gary Orfield, another desegregation expert, said cities without desegregation programs have been experiencing white flight from central cities for decades.

But Smylie of the Educational Equity Project said white flight occurs no matter what type of desegregation program a district implements.

"Arguments that voluntary plans will eventually result in higher levels of desegregation because they prompt less white enrollment declines than mandatory plans are not supported by current evidence," Smylie's report states. "Enrollment data from large city school districts show that long-term declines in white enrollment are similar regardless of the type of plan."

Armour agrees that metropolitan plans achieve the highest level of integration because they mitigate white flight. But he still argues that school improvement, not school desegregation, should be the focus.

"Yes, we should have more St. Louises [where a voluntary metropolitan plan involving the central city and 23 suburban districts is planned]," Armour said. "But those kinds of plans play only a small role in integrating society as a whole. The best way to integrate is to offer the best education to children, especially minority children, so they can take part in the economic wealth of the country. We will have natural integration when we allow minorities to move up the social-class ladder.

"We'll never get complete integration, because ethnic groups still cluster together. But what's the problem with people of the same ethnic group or religion being together."

San Diego

SAN DIEGO — Six years ago, a San Diego Superior Court judge made a daring attempt to avoid the controversy and trauma that accompanies most school desegregation cases.

Judge Louis Welsh approved a plan aimed at voluntarily desegregating the San Diego Unified

Excellence is the key for magnet schools

Educators and researchers say there are some key elements to successful magnet schools.

The most important factor, studies show, is that the school develop an image of excellence. Excellence draws students more than an unusual program or outstanding staff. But there are common dos and don'ts to consider when establishing magnet schools. Some of the dos are:

- Plan and promote magnet schools well in advance of the opening. Lack of planning and selling may lead to failure.
- Carefully locate the magnet school. Schools in heavily non-white areas are less successful in attracting white students. Schools in mixed neighborhoods are more successful.
- Match the type of magnet school to the type of students it must draw to be balanced. For instance, magnets that traditionally draw white students such as gifted or accelerated schools should be placed in non-white areas.
- Establish programs that develop at both grade and expertise levels. For instance, a mathematics and science school might be established at the elementary, junior high and high school levels.

Some of the don'ts:

- A magnet should not be placed on a campus with a regular school because it can create resentment among regular students and staff and usually results in an integrated school but segregated classes.
- Magnet programs that draw high-achieving white students should not be placed at a resident school with lower-achieving non-white students.
- Do not duplicate programs unless there is sufficient demand for the programs. If programs are duplicated, restrict which program white and non-white students can attend so racial balance can be maintained.
- A magnet should not provide unlimited choice. Enrollment should be restricted and carefully monitored to determine the racial mix of both the sending and receiving schools.

integration 'fakes it,' critics say

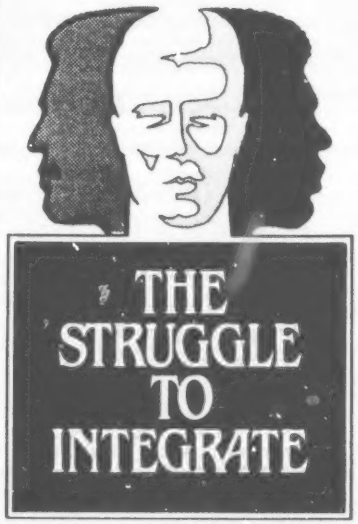
School District. And the city school system became one of a handful nationwide to operate court-ordered voluntary desegregation programs.

More than $100 million later, San Diego educators and community members admit the voluntary program does not, and probably never will, desegregate the 110,000-student school system.

But, the judge and school officials say, the plan has succeeded in avoiding conflict, slowing white flight from the public schools and improving the quality of education in San Diego.

Opponents call it a do-nothing program that was never meant to integrate the district. One Southern California judge deeply involved in desegregation cases bluntly states: San Diego "fakes it."

When the program started, anti-busing advocates applauded it. San Diego school officials touted it — once advertising "It Works" so strongly that the court called a halt



to the public relations campaign.

Educators elsewhere cited it as an example that voluntary integration can work without the turmoil forced busing can cause.

But, desegregation experts say, San Diego illustrates that voluntary programs do not desegregate school systems as effectively as mandatory ones.

The Fresno school system is switching from a mandatory program to a voluntary one. Like San Diego, Fresno's program will be based on magnet or specialty schools designed to attract students of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

San Diego is a city associated with the good life — beaches, sunshine beautiful people. Unlike Los Angeles, its immense neighbor 120 miles to the north, San Diego doesn't evoke images of smog, congestion, high crime, poverty and racial isolation in barrios and ghettos.

But, like all urban areas, the city has social ills. Like most large school districts, San Diego City Schools still struggles with segregation, poverty and discrimination.

The integration issue has dominated the actions and politics of the school district since a segregation lawsuit went to court in 1966. The controversy led to election of a more activist school board, the ouster of former Superintendent Tom Goodman, an administrative reorganization and retirement of Welsh from the case.

In 1975, after 10 years of litigation, Welsh ruled that 23 of the district's 168 schools were segregated. Today, 14 still are. Nine others are considered integrated, but four of those barely meet the court's minimum guidelines.

Another nine predominantly white schools are segregated under court guidelines, but the segregation ruling applies only to minority schools.

The school district — the second largest in the state and ninth largest in the nation — has a student population that is half minority. Hispanics make up 19 percent of the student population, blacks 15 percent, Asians 13 percent and other ethnic groups 3 percent. When the voluntary program started, the district was 70 percent white.

And the debate continues.

"In every city in the country with mandatory assignment, the number of white students enrolled was rapidly decreasing," Welsh said in a rare interview recently. "You're not going to get desegregation by scaring all of the white kids out."

"We didn't have a lot of desegregation [when Welsh was overseeing the case] but we had some," he said. "And it raised the educational standards dramatically. Instead of busing kids out of the ghetto, I'd like to see them educated so they can walk out and stay out. If you want to raise the level of education for minority people, do it through methods that work."

However, Veronica Roeser, the San Diego attorney who took the desegregation case to the courts, said San Diego's voluntary program does not work.

"A prerequisite for determining if desegregation is effective is first asking if there is desegregation," said Roeser in her office at Defenders, Inc., a non-profit defense firm.

"When you look at the numbers, one would have to admit that integration has not become a reality within the unified school district," said Ambroise Brodus, head of San Diego's Urban League.

Bob Filner, former president and member of the San Diego School Board, argues that although the district is not integrated, more children are in integrated settings. About 35,000 children had some interracial contact this year.

"That's why we provide for them to participate in part-time integration activities," said Ed Fletcher, assistant superintendent in charge of the integration program. "I don't think we can make each school integrated."

San Diego's Plan for Racial Integration is a complex, interwoven approach that includes both full-time and part-time integration. The five major components are:

- The Magnet School program, which is the core of the voluntary plan. It attracts students of diverse ethnic backgrounds to specialty schools based on a subject orientation or a learning style. It had 18,763 students participating in 40 programs throughout the city this year. Racial balance is tightly controlled at both sending and receiving schools.

• The Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment Program (VEEP) that allows students to transfer out of their neighborhood schools if the move improves the racial makeup of both schools. Most voluntary transfers — the oldest method of school desegregation — are minority children. This year, only 50 out of 6,159 students in VEEP were white.

• The Learning Center program that mixes elementary school children of different races once a week in a neutral setting where basic skills and specialized curriculum are emphasized. San Diego is planning to drop the program next year because of its cost. About 10,000 students participated this year.

• The Race-Human Relations Program that provides uniform training for the district's 110,000 students and 10,000 employees in race relations.

• The Achievement Goals Program that is designed to raise test scores at 34 district schools, including the segregated schools. It is based on Chicago's mastery learning program, a highly structured teaching plan emphasizing uninterrupted learning and mastering skills before moving on to new ones. (The Fresno district is piloting a version of the San Diego program.)

In 1980, Welsh's court ordered the district to raise test scores at the segregated school to national averages. Scores at minority schools traditionally have been lower than districtwide and nationwide averages.

The controversial order went to the heart of providing equal opportunities for minority children, not just equal facilities. Since that order, the schools' tests scores have steadily risen but still are not at the national average. Fletcher said it will take about five years to reach the goal.

Now, rather than working toward districtwide integration, the emphasis is on upgrading the quality of education in minority schools and improving the race relations program.

Integration advocates recognize that the threat of busing was removed after the state Supreme Court upheld Proposition 1, the state's anti-busing initiative. Not long after the decision, San Diego District Attorney Robert Stern told the court that the integration plan "has never promised racial balance."

Filner said the program improved the quality of education by bringing more than $100 million in special funds to the district. State funds are provided for districts under court order to desegregate. Only San Diego, Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Stockton school districts qualify, but other districts under threat of court order have been fighting for a share for years.

"On the other hand," said Filner, "we spent all that money and haven't desegregated most of the schools we were charged to desegregate. That bothers me."

Last year, the program cost $25 million; about $10 million for busing students to the magnet schools. The six learning centers each cost $300,000 a year to operate; busing students to them costs another $500,000. The Achievement Goal Program cost $2.5 million this year and close to $6 million the past two years.

Some of the most successful magnet schools — the School for Creative and Performing Arts and the Gompers Center for Science, Math and Computers — are among the most costly. SPCA spends close to $600,000 above regular operating expenditures; Gompers spends about $400,000 more.

San Diego operates 40 magnet programs as varied as creative arts, aerospace, computer science and athletics. Children can attend any school in the district as long as it helps the ethnic balance of both the sending and receiving schools. Some schools are in minority sections of town and others are in white sections, so children of both races can attend school outside their neighborhoods.

Last year, attendance restrictions for magnet schools were challenged in a suit filed on behalf of an 11-year-old Chinese-American girl. Because she is considered a minority, she was refused admittance to a magnet school in a predominantly black neighborhood.

The court ruled in favor of the district, but school officials are revising the guidelines.

Program critics say minority students disproportionately bear the burden of busing in both VEEP and magnet school programs.

Balancing magnet schools in predominantly minority neighborhoods depends upon

minority children leaving those neighborhoods to make room for white students who want to attend the specialty schools.

"Magnets are instituted presumably for their [minority children's] benefit," Roeser said. "But the greatest number of students who actually move are minority students."

Non-white community leaders say magnet schools and VEEP create other problems for their neighborhoods.

"VEEP has taken a lot of the best students from the minority schools," said Brodus. "There's been no formal study, but we see the evidence. The students who leave are the high-achieving, motivated students."

School officials say there are ways of measuring success beside numbers.

"Success is in the eyes of the beholder," said Fletcher. "Do you measure success by going into the school and seeing how pupils get along with each other?

"Do the blacks go one way, the whites another and the asians another? Do teachers accept different value systems? Is there integration within the school, not just within the district? Do Mexican-American youngsters have equal access to being cheerleaders?

"We established a monitoring committee this year to try to determine whether or not the program is a success. Some magnet programs have been able to attract pupils more readily than others. Some schools are not as successful as others in those areas."

Filner and others are optimistic about the San Diego plan — as long as the state continues to foot the bill.

"It would not be good for the integration program if our funds got cut off," he said. "We have a chance no other major city in the nation has had to successfully desegregate in a voluntary fashion because we have the demography and a lot of other things going for us.

"A third of our schools are naturally integrated, and we should be able to integrate 22 more. What we have to do now is maintain the naturally integrated ones. That's where other cities have failed. That is going to take city leadership to help us."

Brodus of the Urban League believes integration is possible if the new administration in San Diego, specifically Superintendent Thomas Payzant, provides aggressive leadership.

"We can't forget integration and just go after quality education," Filner said. "In my mind, the two are interrelated. Separate-but-equal is where we started. We can't go back to it out of frustration. I'm not ready to give up on integration."

A desegregation

Seattle's success story is not free of controversy

SEATTLE — This is an easy city to love. Considered one of the country's most livable, it has a look of clean living, civic pride and community involvement.

It was love of Seattle, many community residents say, that led them to desegregate their schools.

That civic-minded attitude may be why Seattle succeeded where others failed — it integrated its 106 schools without violence or turmoil.

That is not to say Seattle's desegregation plan escaped controversy. It spurred a statewide anti-busing campaign that successfully passed a measure to stop forced busing. The initiative eventually was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Critics of the plan also say it was primarily responsible for the dramatic 45,000-student drop in enrollment experienced by the district during the past two decades.

Advocates say it made their community a better place to live and kept courts from determining the destiny of Seattle's schools.

"This city had the courage to build a plan that was just, right and equitable," said Dr. Richard Andrews, one of the creators of the desegregation program.

Seattle is one of a handful of large urban school districts that desegregated their schools without court intervention. The Fresno Unified School District also started its 5-year-old desegregation program before the courts stepped in.

Fresno and Seattle are similar in other ways. They both have close to 50,000 students and about half of them are minorities.

Seattle first attempted to voluntarily

plan born of civic pride

desegregate its schools and later moved to a mandatory program.

The Fresno district is moving from a mandatory to a voluntary program.

The story of Seattle's school desegregation program is one of civic responsibility as much as racial integration.

It started in the spring of 1977 when the district faced the threat of a court order to integrate. Seattle had been struggling with the problem for nearly 25 years since the landmark Supreme Court decision, Brown vs. Board of Education.

But integration did not became a dominant issue until the 1970s.

School officials tried several plans — voluntary transfer policies, exchange programs, human relations programs, closing schools, a middle school reorganization, magnet schools.

In 1977, it was apparent stronger measures were needed if the community, rather than the court, was going to determine the destiny of Seattle's schools. The Seattle chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People filed a complaint with the U.S. Office for Civil Rights because of increasing segregation in the school system. The American Civil Liberties Union and the Church Council of Greater Seattle both threatened lawsuits if the district did not come up with a realistic program.

The district established a voluntary plan and then set out to prepare the community for the mandatory plan that eventually would follow.

"We had a 17-year history of failure with voluntary means," said Wayne Foley, coordinator of integration services for the Seattle Public Schools. "If you really want to do the job of integrating schools, you bite the bullet."

"Voluntary doesn't work. Mandatory does," said Collin Williams, head of the district's integration office.

The plan devised by a citizens committee and now in use is mandatory with a voluntary backup based on options, or magnet schools.

Seattle school children are bused to schools outside their neighborhoods but can choose to attend a specialty school instead.

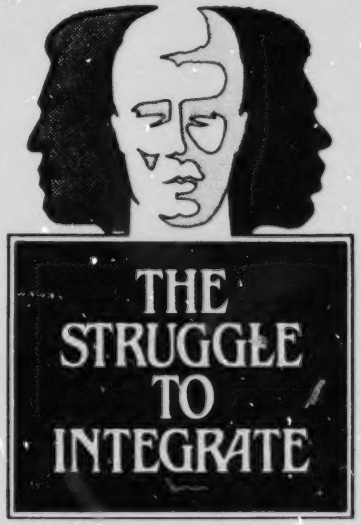
"Fifty percent go to their assigned school, 50 percent choose options," said Foley.

The Seattle plan contains the following elements:

- A major reorganization and grade restructuring that linked predominantly minority schools with mostly white schools. For instance, a minority elementary school might become a first- through third-grade school and its corresponding "majority" school switched to a fourth- through sixth-grade school. Kindergarten was exempted.
- Changes in the junior and senior high school attendance patterns so elementary schools would feed into schools outside their neighborhoods. The new feeder pattern was phased-in so students could graduate from schools they already were attending and would not be bused to rival schools.
- Educational Options allowed students to attend schools with either different learning styles or specialized curriculums.

The district also strategically closed 14 schools — because of declining enrollment — and placed refugee and bilingual programs at predominantly white schools to improve their racial balance.

"The reason desegregation happened was because of the tremendous sense of civic pride," said Dick Andrews, chairman of the University of Washington's education administration department and considered the "godfather" of the Seattle plan. "There are a lot of people in Seattle who love this city dearly, and they were



willing to step forward and do things."

School officials and the citizens group, the Districtwide Advisory Committee for Desegregation under the direction of Andrews, first invited a representative from every major civic organization to serve on the committee. Organizations also were encouraged to study desegregation and devise their own plans.

Shan Mullen, a local attorney and member of the Municipal League, established a no-name committee to facilitate communication within the community. The committee, designed to have no name so it would not become a focal point in the desegregation discussions, brought together spokesmen from diverse groups and philosophies to debate.

"We didn't try to bury the issue. We tried to get the issue out in the community for discussion," said Andrews. "We also kept the leadership of the community in touch with each other to stop the rumor mill."

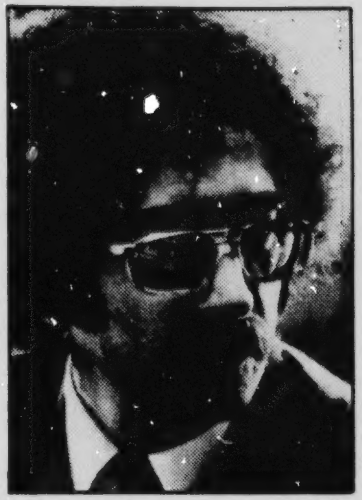
Former Superintendent Dave Moberly and members of the desegregation committee started a semantics campaign. Studies had shown that the phrase "mandatory busing" was inflammatory, said Andrews.

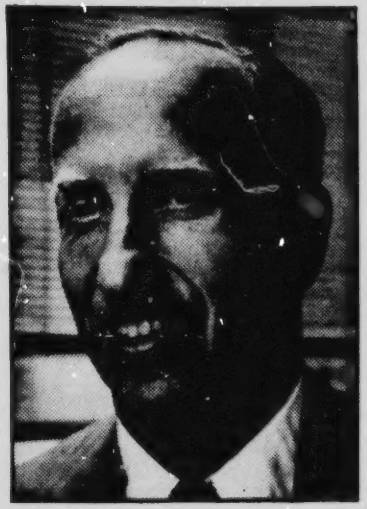
Through the efforts of school and community leaders, Seattle residents started thinking in terms of "fixed assignments" rather than mandatory busing. "Educational options" was used in lieu of voluntary desegregation based on magnet schools.

Seattle's plan became a "voluntary" one because it was implemented without court intervention, even though it was based on a mandatory, or rather fixed assignment, method.

Political leaders were asked to treat the issue responsibly during their campaigns. They agreed not to make it an issue.

"Seattle is unique," said Moberly, who now heads the non-profit Seattle Foundation. "People care, and they get involved. The opposition was responsible. The politicans could have made





Dick Andrews, far left, is considered the 'godfather' of the Seattle desegregation plan. Robert Dorse is coordinator of the anti-busing group in Seattle.

Seattle Times

mileage out of it, but they didn't. Labor leaders could have let it become a cause but they didn't. The mayor came out to support it.

"The feeling was 'We've got to do it, so let's get on with it, comply with the law and not go through the court."

The citizens committee and school staff developed four possible plans. The Urban League developed a fifth. And after 30 community meetings to discuss the plans, the board voted 6 to 1 in favor of the mandatory plan.

"A key thing that swung the vote of the board was a letter they received signed by the mayor and the presidents of the Chamber of Commerce, the Municipal League and the Church Council," said Moberly. "It said, 'Don't go to court. Do what you have to do, and we'll support you.' "

After the process was over, Moberly was still superintendent, the board was not recalled, there were no incidents of violence connected with the desegregation plan, and, within three years, all the schools were racially balanced.

"We did it without the trauma of other plans and we maintained local control," Moberly said. "A telling story about it is that everyone takes credit for the plan. That's great."

A number of community residents say Seattle's is a success story.

Others count the loss of white student enrollment and the loss of money for those students and disagree. They also cite the high cost of desegregating the school district.

A strong opponent of the plan is Robert Dorse, a local architect and coordinator of the Seattle anti-busing group, Citizens for Voluntary Integration Committee.

Dorse said the school district did not get parents' input and ignored the desires of the community. As a result, he said, his organization successfully passed Initiative 350, a statewide measure that sought to stop busing for

desegregation. The initiative later was thrown out by the U.S. Supreme Court.

"They preoccupied themselves with a social experiment at the sacrifice of their educational mission," said Dorse. "It cost a great deal of money, in the millions.

"It doesn't work. You have middle-class flight so what's left are the people who can't afford to bail out. You have a segregated public school system of poor people."

The white flight issue in Seattle is central to any assessment of its effectiveness. The school system's enrollment dropped dramatically over the past 20 years.

Enrollment fell from a high in 1964 of slightly more than 94,000 to about 48,500 students in 1981. It now is close to 50,000. Before the desegregation program was implemented, enrollment dropped by 10,672 students. During the first three years of the plan, enrollment dropped another 10,000.

School officials blame part of the decline on white flight. But they also attribute it to the housing market, the large Boeing employee layoff in the 1970s (the period of greatest student loss) and natural changes in birth rate and demography.

"I contend you can't worry about that issue because if you do, you will do insidious things," said Andrews. "Some people will sell their homes at a loss, disrupt their kids education, put them on a much longer bus ride to avoid desegregation — because they are petrified of black people.

"You can't build a city around people who are going to leave it. Those people will find another reason to leave. People either buy into a city or into the suburban American dream."

Andrews said an important side effect of the desegregation plan is that parents are thinking about their children's education.

"It's dislodged the notion of neighborhood schools in a lot of people's minds," he said. "More parents are sending their children to options than sticking with their assigned school so at least they are making an evaluation, a judgment about their children's education."

But school administrators are concerned about the increasing cost of developing specialty programs and transporting students to them.

"It's so expensive, we can't afford it in these days of tight budgets. We don't have $6 million extra," said Foley. "But we can't get out from under the plan because the minute you call it off, you go to court and you lose.

"Desegregating schools is a short-term solution," he said. "As long as you're moving kids, you'll never get out from under it until you break those [segregated] housing patterns. School districts have to get involved with the housing issue if they want to solve the problem.

"Next year, the district is assigning a staff person to work full-time with city and state officials on the problem of segregated housing patterns.

"Racism is a reality, and segregated housing is the most real form of segregation."

Magnet school turns around its reputation

SAN DIEGO — Victoria Coles, a 10th-grader from an affluent part of town, recalls being told that even the teachers got beaten up at Gompers Center for Science, Math and Computers. She transferred anyway.

"People said my elementary school was tough, too, and it wasn't," said Victoria. "Now, this school is getting a good reputation."

Gompers, in a low-economic black section of San Diego, is one of 40 magnet schools designed to integrate the San Diego Unified School District.

In 1976, 99 percent of the school's students were minority, mostly black. The school had low test scores and the reputation for lax discipline. Even many resident families sent their children to school outside the neighborhood.

When the science, math and computer magnet was placed at Gompers, it faced several obstacles.

Magnet schools located in the heart of a minority area generally do not attract enough white students to desegregate the school. Those with poor reputations have even a harder time.

"It took a long time for even local parents to accept the fact that Gompers was a good place to send their kids," said Tom Yount, director of the Gompers magnet. "Then we started walking away with first-place honors at the science fairs, and people from every neighborhood in town started coming."

Now, parents place their kindergartners on the waiting list for the seventh- through 12th-grade school. Last year, a replica of Gompers — Bell Junior High School — was established because of the popularity of the specialty school.

The school still has to deal with the resentment and tension created by placing a high-achieving, mostly white magnet program on a lower-achieving, mostly black campus. But that very problem is what brings the school's overall enrollment down to an acceptable level of minority students.

More than 600 students — 60 percent of them white — are enrolled in the magnet program. About 300 neighborhood seventh- and eighth-grade students — nearly all black — attend the regular school. The overall mix is an acceptable ethnic balance, according to the court.

William Bowen, a resident student, is on a waiting list to get into the magnet classes down the hall.

"I'm supposed to be in it next year," said the eighth-grader. "It's a real good school, and I love to work with computers. That's what the future is going to be, and I want to get a good job. This is a great school. The teachers want you to learn. They're not baby sitters."

Darrell White, another neighborhood student, said: "The classes seem better, and they have computers and stuff" at the magnet school.

Yount said Gompers still has a long way to go for true integration but that the staff is working on programs to mix the two student bodies.

"There's tension at all levels — the resident parents and teachers," said computer teacher Greg Volger. "That attitude goes down to the kids."

Regular teachers often resent magnet school teachers who have all the extras — smaller class sizes, aides in every classroom, up-to-date materials and additional supplies.

The "extras" cost the San Diego school district nearly $400,000 a year on top of regular school expenditures. Most of the money is for staffing, not the expensive computer or science equipment.

By graduation, Gompers students know two computer languages and have taken twice as many math and science courses as most high school graduates. The basics in English, social studies and history also are required.

Courses offerings include: classes in four computer languages; medical biology; astronomy; space science; government in space; college calculus; computer design and structure; and Russian.

The school has a centralized computer, 32 computer terminals and a variety of specialized science equipment, ranging from a laser/holography apparatus to a lasergraph.

But not all of the students ride the bus for the computers.

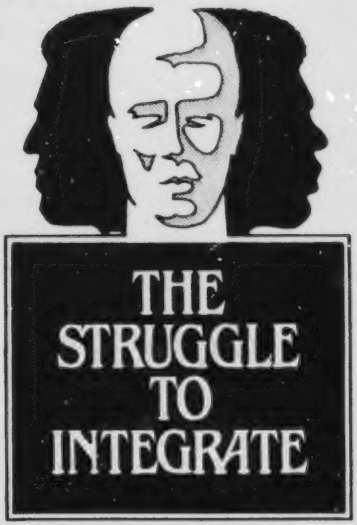
"We all have science in mind, and we're all here to learn," said Wendy Wood. "I was first introduced to the program by the big cheering sections at the science fairs. They had encouragement in science, and I wasn't getting it at my high school."

But Wendy and her fellow students in the honors physics class at Gompers worry that the humanities are lost among the computer hardware and software.

"You have to maintain the arts. A lot of students don't know how to write," stressed Wendy.

"A lot of people here can take apart a microcomputer, but they don't know what 'Hamlet' is," said Dan Oliverio.

Paseo Del Rey's idea – being good is expected of students



LOS ANGELES — The Paseo Del Rey magnet school started with the idea that any child, no matter what race or socio-economic group, can achieve academic excellence if it's expected.

Many schools like Paseo Del Rey, known as fundamental schools, have been built on that concept. They have been successful in California, Texas, Wisconsin and Washington.

Paseo Del Rey is one of 87 magnet schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District's voluntary integration program. It is designed to draw students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds to balance the school.

The secret to the school's success is that everyone — students, parents, teachers and administrators — knows what is expected of him or her.

Students and parents sign contracts with their expectations spelled out. Teachers and administrators make commitments to parents that students will learn.

When students achieve, they are rewarded. When they misbehave, they are reprimanded.

"If you are consistent with children, they understand," said Principal Bertram Ashe.

At Paseo Del Rey, every child finishes every assignment. During breaks, children can be seen sitting beneath the trees in the schoolyard doing homework or makeup assigments.

Behavioral expectations are stressed and stressed again.

"They come with diverse behavior habits, and we convert them," said Ashe. "They are expected to be polite to each other and to adults. They understand that and are comfortable with it."

The result is that Paseo Del Rey scored among the top 15 percent of elementary schools in California on state-given tests during the past three years. For two years, the scores were above those expected of a school with Paseo Del Rey's mix of students from all ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

"We don't boast," said Ashe. "We simply do it."

The school also has its own testing program. Students are tested at the

beginning of each school year and again at the end to assess progress made during the year.

"That is a basic part of our magnet," said the principal. "We do the best to deliver what we promise."

While delivering that academic promise, Paseo Del Rey also mixes children. This year, the student body is about 60 percent white and 40 percent minority children. In past years, it has averaged 45-50 percent minority. The Los Angeles district is about 70 percent minority.

"This school is a microcosm of the city of Los Angeles," said Ashe. "We draw from South and Central L.A., from Watts. A hundred communities are represented in this school.

"All socio-economic levels are here, but you couldn't tell. After a year to a year and a half, disadvantaged children are doing as well as kids from affluent areas because of the atmosphere in which they find themselves."

Enrollment at the school also is stable, which is unusual for an urban school. Most of the fifth-graders have been at Paseo Del Rey since the fundamental program started five years ago.

"They are not strangers to each other," said Ashe. "They are family."

Without the fundamental magnet program, the school would close for lack of students.

While it is no Beverly Hills, Paseo Del Rey is near the beach and exclusive enough that few families with children can afford to live there.

Yet the school is at its maximum with 500 students and has 180 children on its waiting list.

"The biggest advantage is that the parents want their children here, and the children want to be here," said the principal.

Business/Work/Education: New Linkages

The Christian Science Monitor

Big City Schools and Technology

Educational Supplement

By James Bencivenga

Hi-tech how-to in New York

New York City has pioneered computer literacy and computer curriculum development for teachers, plus rigorous courseware evaluation by administrative staff.

"We couldn't believe the interest our teachers showed for learning about how the computer could help them in the classroom," says Charlotte Frank, executive director of the city's division of curriculum and instruction. "We had to stop being incredulous quickly, though, and provide the training they were seeking." A new computer and information science unit was created to provide citywide leadership in computer education.

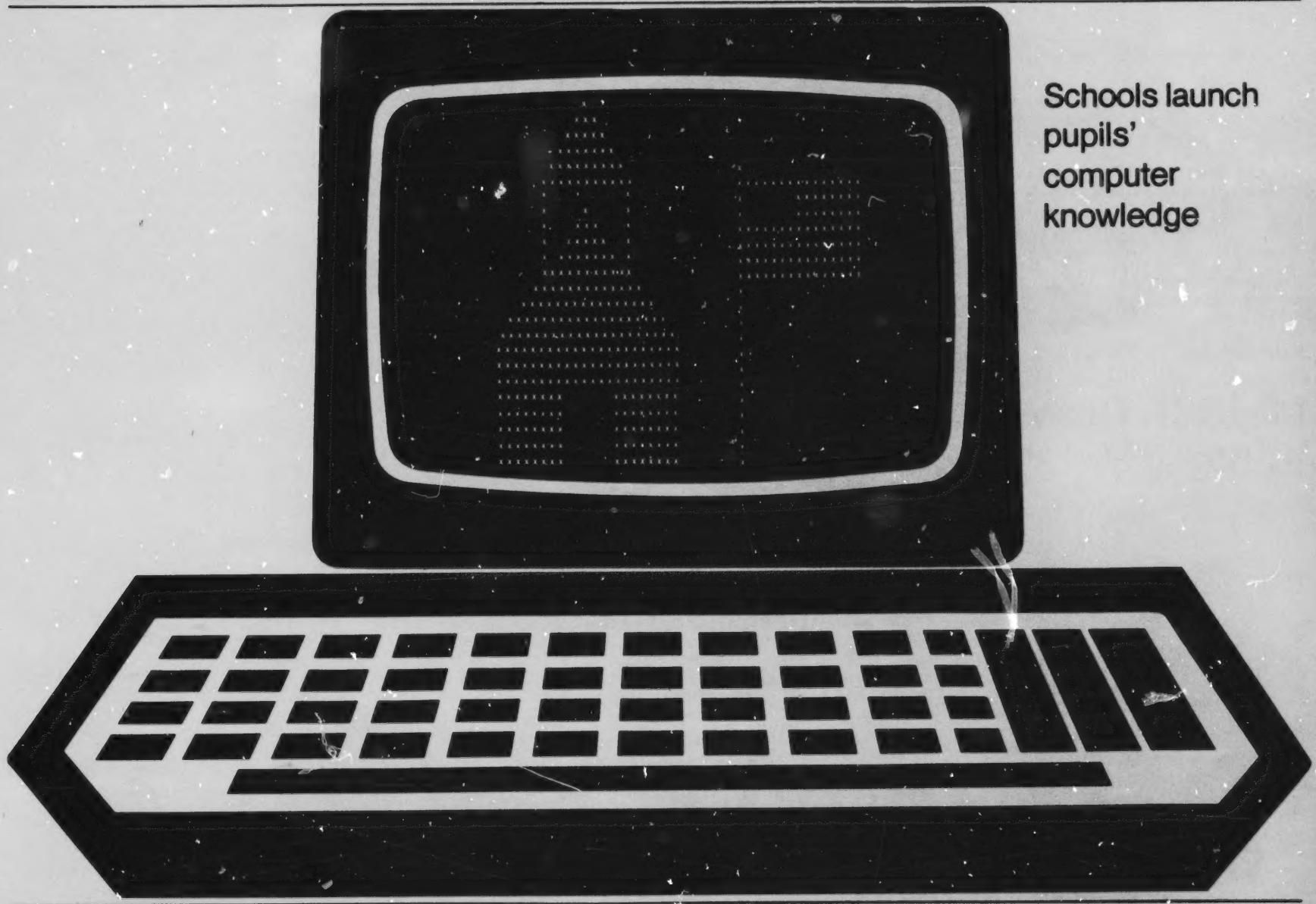
With more than 1,000 buildings, 918,000 students, and 55,000 teachers in New York schools, 33 independent local school boards throughout its five boroughs, and a severe local budget crunch complicated by federal cutbacks, it was "flexibility and grass-roots participation for any citywide computer plan," Ms. Frank says.

In the first six months of the 1982-83 academic year, New York trained more than 5,000 teachers in microcomputer skills in 27 satellite training centers. Interest throughout the nation's most populous school system was so great that teachers were charged $25 for 20 hours of computer workshops. Extensive summer sessions are planned for July and August.

All software for the district must funnel through the division of curriculum and instruction as well. "This is to ensure quality control," Ms. Frank says of a central administration role in a city long renowned for its leadership in curriculum evaluation and development.

"We have cooperative agreements with both MECC and EPIE [see Page B13] on mutual criteria for instructional software and are in the process of establishing a [computer network] for the city similar to the network MECC has for Minnesota," she says.

New York has also set guidelines for hardware compatibility. All equipment purchases paid for by district funds must be one of six machines: Apple, Radio Shack TRS-80s, Atari, Commodore PET, Texas Instruments, or IBM personal computers.



Schools launch pupils' computer knowledge

Houston value: lifelong skill

"Our students today will deal with a world computers have made. So we're inculcating a value, not just a skill, when we talk of computer literacy.

"The value is that each student will be responsible for his or her own lifelong learning in computer technology. We know everything a student learns about computers will not emanate from our institutions. But we want to be the key support in this lifelong venture."

That's the education-technology philosophy of the Houston Independent School District, as Pat Sturdivant, assistant superintendent for technology, outlines it.

And Houston's philosophy is backed up by one of the most comprehensive plans for bringing computers into the schools of any major urban district in the country.

Since September, when the district began a separate department of technology under Ms. Sturdivant's supervision, more than 3,000 of Houston's 14,000 teachers have received training in computer literacy. By the fall of 1985, 80 percent of its teachers will have received minimum instruction. Of the district's 260 schools, all but 45 already have computers.

More than 1,800 Apple II computers, plus other makes, are in place throughout the district. Houston has its own in-house repair shop, which can service any equipment the district owns rather than relying on more expensive vendor service contracts.

In a move for standardization, and "to get some control over the computer proliferation explosion," Ms. Sturdivant says, the district at this point limits its computer purchases to Apple IIs. Available courseware was a key component in making this decision, she says. Her department maintains its own curriculum evaluation staff. No software is purchased by the district unless it passes its standards.

Neither computers nor software is released to a building until the principal takes 20 hours of in-service training.

The district is creating a new job category in the educational computing field and will train 35 "teacher technologists" this summer. They will become the cadre of computer specialists throughout the district. Plans are for every school in the system to have a teacher technologist who has had 296 hours of training.

"Maintaining a competitive salary scale has been one of my biggest concerns," Ms. Sturdivant says. "How do you explain to someone who has been teaching 30 years and has a master's degree that a 26-year-old computer programmer is worth $35,000 or we'll lose him?" When administrators from other school districts come to see the Houston center, she exacts their promise not to hire any of her people.

Last October, the district began an innovative pilot program in two elementary schools, one of which is 95 percent black, the other 95 percent Hispanic. Analagous to a library's lending out a book, it teaches students and their parents the basics of how to use a computer. Working with 48 home computers, students and parents go through 12 hours of instruction at school and then take the computer home for two weeks.

The program, called "Computers Can," is being watched closely by school officials around the country as it concerns itself with equal access to the new computer technology by poor and minority students.

Principals streamline school offices

Pittsburgh boasts the third-largest concentration of corporate headquarters in the country (after New York and Chicago) and one of the highest per capita ratios of executives and managers to overall population. Not surprisingly, principals, not students, are getting school computers first.

"The use of data for management and planning is a first priority for us to make informed decisions," says superintendent of schools Richard C. Wallace. "Most schools have not organized data to the extent we're trying to. Administratively, we're trying to be thoroughly analytical."

The decision to forgo the purchase of stand-alone microcomputers in any large numbers was made by Pittsburgh for two reasons, says James Angevine, director of the management information system. "We didn't think enough good software was out there yet, and even if it was we knew that if you looked at individual schools, where the learning takes place, the most critical factor in the success of a particular school lies with the building principal as the instructional leader. We chose to make that person more productive first."

"A computerized management system will first let us measure the academic gains we are seeking, and oversee the efficient operation of the entire district in a more businesslike manner," Mr. Angevine says. "The guts of the system is what lets an administra-

tor get appropriate, accurate information from a data base in time to make a sound educational decision."

The first information that goes into Pittsburgh's data base is student information on grades, testing, and class scheduling. The second priority is financial data on the district budget. Each building prinicipal will have a discretionary, computer-monitored budget. Personnel records form a third category of data. Community and demographic information completes the record.

Confidentiality and privacy based on an administrative rule of "need to know" are being carefully worked out. A student's records will be available only to the principal of the school he attends, plus key central office personnel routed through Mr. Angevine's office.

A districtwide electronic mail system will be in place by September. A Data General minicomputer connected by phone lines will allow school board members, each principal, and the district administration to access the central memory from remote user sites. There will be a terminal and keyboard in each of the 87 schools serving the district's 42,250 students.

The cost to the district for the system installed is $965,000. Two grants from the Buhl Foundation in Pittsburgh totaling $111,000 allowed the district to use the consulting services of professors and students at Carnegie-Mellon University in planning and setting up the network and data base.

Capital's new primers:

Emphasis begins early with 'Writing to Read'

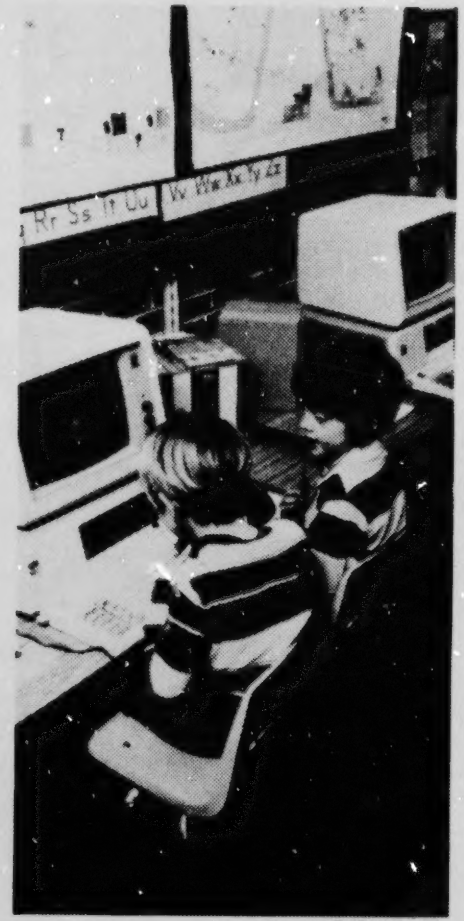
When little Albert Kong and Mark Hargraves look up at the walls of their kindergarten class at Thompson Elementary School, their eyes scan more than just the letters of the alphabet, pretty posters, and student drawings. On one entire wall stretches a computer flow chart that outlines the writing and reading curriculum these two classmates are taking with the aid of an IBM microcomputer.

"The program is called 'Writing to Read,' " says the assistant superintendent for instruction, James T. Guines. "We have 15 schools and more than 1,500 kindergartners and first-graders piloting it. We're seeing the beginning of the end of one era and the start of another in teaching language concepts."

Although it has been only four or five years since the microcomputer first began appearing in classrooms around the country, the nation's capital has become one of the leading large-city school districts in providing computer instruction for its students and computer-based information management for its administrators.

A five-year plan spelling out how the district would meet a computer-literacy requirement for its 91,000-plus students was established by the school board in 1981. In charge of setting up the program was the superintendent, Floretta Dukes McKenzie, considered by many educational observers both inside and outside the district to be a national role model on how to provide the strong leadership needed for such a major undertaking in a city school system.

'Byte, Spot, byte'



By Paul Conklin

Early reading lesson in D.C.

Part of Washington's plan requires every teacher (there are 5,500 in the district) to be computer literate within five years; makes tenure for all new teachers contingent upon computer literacy; allows the promotion of ninth-graders only if they are computer literate; and requires that every administrator and building principal know how to use the electronic mail and computer management system.

One reason for the D.C. schools' easy acceptance of computers is that the federal government has been "using them for years," says Mr. Guines. "Because of this, our teachers and parents know how important computers are."

"From the outset we decided our computer operations should cut across both the instructional and mangagement roles within schools," says J. Weldon Greene, director of program development in the D.C. schools.

An electronic mail network, when completed, will enable 189 schools to communicate with one another on screens connected to telephones.

D.C. schools test extensively, with weekly reports going to parents and administrators. Each of the elementary schools will have an electronic test scanner attached to its computer to score tests for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The results, simultaneously recorded in the central office, will enable administrators to monitor the current progress of all 45,000 K-6 pupils.

Washington schools also have their own summer computer camp for 600 students and have established a number of advanced scientific and engineering programs centered on sophisticated computer labs in high schools.

Creating a friendly climate for 'electronic teachers'

If inner-city and rural students are to have the same educational opportunity as those in technology-conscious suburban schools, they will need access to new electronic tools. Before any school acquires computers for classroom use, it must overcome such obstacles as budget restrictions, teacher resistance, and unfamiliarity with hardware and software capabilities.

Recently The Monitor interviewed administrators of a number of school systems, including Washington, D. C., New York City, Houston, and Pittsburgh, to learn the steps they feel are essential in a successful computer instruction program. They listed these priorities:

- Strong commitment and leadership from the top down. Microcomputer technology is new and calls for major changes in the ways schools will be run. Like aircraft carriers, large school systems must turn slowly and turn far in advance of where they want to be. Anything short of clear policy from the board of trustees and sustained leadership on the part of the superintendent can very quickly leave a district with a floundering program.
- Wide-scale teacher training in the new technology.
- A software curriculum and evaluation plan that promotes districtwide academic goals.
- A coordinated hardware purchasing plan so that economies of scale and systemwide compatibility result.
- Providing every student with access to daily time on a computer.
- Close technical collaboration with local universities, where they exist.
- Finding the money to do all of the above.

Best use of school hardware and software EPIE's aim

Ken Komoski has seen a number of innovational teaching aids wind up in academic limbo. In many schools, overhead projectors, teaching machines, filmstrips, movies, television, and language labs loudly extolled and hastily purchased are now collecting dust.

As executive director of a 15-year-old nonprofit organization called the Educational Products Information Exchange (EPIE), Mr. Komoski's self-appointed mission is shepherding the classroom introduction of computers and their educational applications. He wants to make sure that the newest technologies are shielded from the kind of rejection some earlier innovations have met.

Mr. Komoski hopes to convince schools, colleges, and parents' groups that EPIE, not the supermarket sales clerk, is the place to turn for sophisticated evaluations of all educational computer products, from hardware to software to printers to user manuals.

He says three factors encourage him to believe computer education will continue to expand in schools:

- The microcomputer marks a shift in the way our whole society does business. Companies and parents are demanding that schools teach students how to use them. "Did you ever see community leaders saying, 'We must have filmstrips, we must have overhead projectors'?" he asks.
- In an era of budget-cutting, schools are subjecting all capital purchases – including computers – to careful scrutiny.
- Most teachers accept that computers will be increasingly important in the future and that they and their students must know how to use them.

EPIE's goal is to have at least one-fourth of the nation's nearly 16,000 school districts subscribe to its computer-product evaluation service. And it has taken a major step toward its goal by joining forces with Consumers Union, the national organization that evaluates consumer goods, to study computer products.

'No single district has the money or talent to cover the some 700 to 1,000 software companies we estimate are producing courseware,' Mr. Komoski says.

The two nonprofit organizations will provide subscribers with detailed reports, to be called Pro/Files, on computers, monitors, printers, and courseware (the term for computer programs for education). They will also publish Microgram, a monthly newsletter on the microcomputer field.

"We had the technological expertise, and Consumers Union had the name recognition," Mr. Komoski says. Funding from the Ford Foundation and Carnegie Corporation, plus assistance from Columbia University Teachers College in New York City, have lifted the EPIE-Consumers Union project to the point where it hopes to have significant influence over the sales of computer-education products – estimated at more than $1 billion annually.

Currently a group of urban school systems participate in a techonology review with EPIE: Alburquerque, Cincinati, Detroit, Houston, Salt Lake City, and Boston. While New York City public schools evaluate their own software, they and EPIE have agreed on the same criteria for software.

"No single district has the money or talent to cover the some 700 to 1,000 software companies we estimate are producing courseware," Mr. Komoski says. These companies range in size from major publishers to mom-and-pop, one-person programming shops.

As part of its work EPIE asks that new educational software be sent to it for evaluation at no cost. "Otherwise courseware will merely be bought to fill a vacuum called a microcomputer," he says.

Its full- and part-time staff of 25, and more than 300 free-lance product evaluators nationwide, give EPIE the expertise not only to handle a steady stream of evaluations, but also the means to increase its contacts with schools.

A standard courseware evaluation consists of three independent specialists reviewing, for approximatley 10 hours each, the academic content and computer-learning advantages of each program. A fourth staff coordinator then compiles and "grades" the information.

Elementary schools and smaller districts have been among the most receptive to EPIE's computer-evaluation services thus far, Mr. Komoski says. "Due to their not having adequate staff, they have come to view us as part of their research department," he says.

The Commercial Appeal
Memphis, Tennessee

Education: Whose Business Is It?

A Four-Part Series *By Linda Wallace Williams*

Education: Whose Business Is It?

Need Nurtures Corporate-School Links

Business and education have been the economy's separate and unequal partners, but the wall of distrust that has kept them apart is crumbling — shaken by necessity.

"Education and business used to be like two ships that passed in the night," said Deleware Gov. Pierre duPont, who pioneered the Jobs for America's Graduates program. "We can no longer afford that strategy. They must chart the same course if we are to survive."

Without more highly trained students, business has found it can't compete against its government-subsidized foreign competition. And without business support, educators were without the resources to prepare students to meet the new job demands.

Out of this mutual need, corporate-school partnerships were born.

"Everybody is talking about it everywhere you go," said Pete Weaver, a Washington attorney who coordinates business-education relations for the school system there. "Partnerships are very much on people's mind."

Business-education coalitions have become to the 1980s what the word relevance was to the 1960s. The programs range from image-building projects like adopt-a-school to political unions, financial contributions, curriculum reform and job-training programs.

In Boston, the partnership has helped shape policy by promising 1,000 jobs to Boston high school graduates if the school administration meets its improvement goals.

And in Washington, businesses and educational leaders established centers in pre-engineering, finance, computer technology, hotel management, and food and health services, deciding those skills were needed most in the local economy.

Transformation from the industrial age to the information age made educators of businessmen and businessmen of educators.

Corporate leaders like Francis 'Frank' Maguire, outgoing senior vice president for Federal Express Corp., began discussing reading and writing skills in corporate board rooms while superintendents and college presidents began talking marketing strategy, employe productivity and cutting costs.

Business was forced into its role as educator because education was not keeping pace with the economy, said John Hoy, a member of the New England Board of Education.

"Businesses needed these people like yesterday," said Hoy. "They can't afford to wait for the schools to produce the people with the skills they require. So they are doing it themselves."

Conservative estimates put business expenditures in training and educating employes at $40 billion a year, with a portion of that being used to teach remedial course and simple things like memo writing.

In 1978, AT&T was spending $999 million a year on education and training, and about 2,000 of its employes had PhDs. By comparison, a well-known think-tank like MIT was spending about $222 million and had on its staff about 900 PhDs.

Businessmen are not the only ones concerned with the gap between student skills and job de-

About the Author

LINDA WALLACE WILLIAMS has been with the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* since 1977, moving to the education beat in 1981. Prior to this she worked for the *St. Louis Dispatch*.

In 1977 Williams received her Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She has been awarded the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* and Eugene Field Scholarships and is a member of Kappa Tau Alpha Journalism Honorary. Additionally she is a founding member of the Memphis Association of Black Journalists.

Williams began her analysis of emerging business and school relationships by looking at the Business Education Coalition in Memphis. In the course of her Fellowship work she traveled to Boston, St. Louis, Dover, Delaware and Washington, D.C. to look at developments in these cities as well.

mands or with the quality of students being turned out by the nation's schools and colleges.

Governors like duPont, Mississippi's William Winter and North Carolina's James Hunt also are worried. They think the nation's security is at stake.

They and businessmen like Maguire wonder why curriculums concentrate on low-level skills like adding and subtracting — which machines do better — instead of basic human skills like thinking.

And why, in a world of computers, schools teach students to fix calculators.

That's the problem a conference on education and economics convened by Hunt and Carnegie Foundation president David Hamburg had in mind when it issued a national alert.

"This disparity (between skills taught and the ones the economy demands) is a major threat to our future national economy. The nation's productivity and ability to compete in world markets are jeopardized," participants concluded. What can be done?

A report from the Carnegie Foundation, composed after a meeting of 50 leaders in education, business, labor, foundations and science, urged formation of a national policy coordinating education and economics.

Neither educators nor politicians expect that national policy to evolve soon. To them, it's the stuff of which dreams are made.

So, in its absence, business-corporate partnerships are beginning to fill the void.

North Carolina has been successful in using education as a tool to economic development. So has New England, an area blessed with abundant high-tech industries.

Even politicians are getting in on the act.

"Elected leaders have a vital responsibility to fully understand the new link between business and academia, as well as to grasp the importance of the region's educational resources in economic terms," says Hoy.

Urban education is entering the computer age at a time when the public is unwilling to approve tax increases, the state budgets are tight and the federal government is unwilling to assume a larger role.

In places like Boston, where 9 out of 10 households don't have children in public schools, it is getting increasingly difficult to get the community to take an interest in the schools. Especially since only 2 of the nation's largest 25 school districts still have a majority of white students.

Businessmen have been among the first to realize their future depends on these students, and that is why they have been leading the battle cry, calling in favors as they did in Boston to get a needed budget increase and financing a good portion of the Memphis schools' efforts for a sales tax increase.

Education: Whose Business Is It?

Schools Learn New Marketing Strategy

Executives at one of Memphis' largest businesses were worried. They were losing ground to the competition with no turnaround in sight. People had lost faith in their product — a product they thought was good.

Officials decided upon a marketing plan designed to convince the public of their product's value. The selling of the Memphis city schools began.

Plough, Inc., Federal Express Corp., and Holiday Inns loaned executives to the system, and they developed a marketing strategy after surveys and visits to the schools.

Their proposal so impressed school Supt. Willie Herenton that he asked the Ford Foundation for money to carry it out. He got enough to begin it with eight schools.

Principals of the chosen schools went into the advertising business during the 1981-82 school year. They formed teacher-parent committees, which sent out letters, fliers and newspapers and held special open houses.

The school system assisted by running full-page newspaper ads and a public education support group called IMAGE contributed television commercials.

When it was over, the predominantly black system had a net increase of 700 white students and had attracted, in the process, a number of black students from private schools.

Herenton and most of the principals thought the efforts were worthwhile.

"Public relations is an area that schools don't get involved in very much" he says. "I think it is extremely important."

Many of today's educators share Herenton's respect for such business tools. But it has not always been so.

Education had its heyday when the post-war baby boom began more than three decades ago. Schoolhouses sprang up — first elementary schools, then junior highs and, finally, high schools.

But, as quickly as it began, the population boom ended, and administrators were left to ponder the future of empty buildings and unneeded teachers.

Schools closed by the thousands. To complicate things further, court-ordered desegregation began and whites fled the systems.

Such problems were new to educators, but not to businessmen. Many a company had found itself faced with such problems as underused properties and dwindling market share, but they managed to succeed, just the same.

School superintendents realized that and began to look to business for solutions.

What resulted were programs like the Memphis schools marketing plan. Those schools adapted, and that's what others are going to have to do if they are to survive, says Harold 'Bud' Hodgkinson, a senior fellow at the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington.

Hodgkinson says businesses have succeeded where schools have failed because they are more flexible.

McDonald's restaurants is his star pupil. McDonald's also profited from the baby boom. But when the youngsters from whom they had made their fortune grew up, McDonald's added breakfast to the menu, an item that appeals to an older group. A potential problem turned into a fortune.

Schools are going to have to do the same sort of thing to meet the constant fluctuation in demand, Hodgkinson says.

He suggests, for starters, the establishment of community holding companies that can use empty school buildings and partial mergers of the schools and other service agencies.

"Partial mergers with other local and intermediate service units should be encouraged, particularly in the normal, very small public school, which is usually located next to a very small social service agency, a small health care agency, etc. Partial mergers will allow the continuation of personalized service delivery while making administrative functions more efficient."

Although the schools have not learned their lessons as well as McDonald's, they have started to diversify to some extent.

Community education programs now provide adult access to courses like dancing or art. And, as more mothers have entered the work force, after school day-care programs have opened, as have programs for displaced homemakers.

However, the business influence is most evident in the central administration, which has tightened administrative costs and borrowed marketing and public relations tools.

These are changes born of necessity and reared, in many instances, by the business community.

"Businesses look upon their involvement as an investment. They don't want to invest either time or money in a school system they feel is unstable or bad," said Pete Weaver, a Washington attorney who coordinates business-education efforts for the District of Columbia.

"I believe you have to have fiscal accountability before you can get businesses interested in the schools. You can have fiscal accountability without business-education partnerships but I don't think you can have business-education partnerships without fiscal accountability."

Memphis, again, offers proof.

The City Council unknowingly fostered the business-education relationship when it asked Future Memphis, a group of business leaders, to review school procedures several years ago to make sure they were sound.

The report concluded that the system's practices were good and recommended several procedural changes school officials since have adopted.

Upon that, the business-education coalition grew, and it now includes such efforts as adopt-a-school. Rotary Club teacher recognition awards and support-the-public-schools days at the Memphis Area Chamber of Commerce.

Washington has a similar story but a different ending.

Businesses donated their services to review Washington's finances, but their report ended up on a shelf. The business community, as a result, backed away from the system for many years.

Herenton believes in Memphis schools. And instinct tells him he needs white students in the system because black systems are perceived as inferior.

Some educators, however, see a danger to this approach. If schools concentrate on improving their marketable schools, as business instinct would suggest, they risk discriminating against unmarketable schools in poor or black areas.

Ultimately, a system could harbor two unequal systems, one for the rich and one for the poor.

Officials in Washington and Boston say public schools should try to improve their image and encourage community support of the schools. But they balk at suggestions that they actively recruit people who have fled.

"The people who fled the system are gone. Our responsibility is to the people who remained behind....who stuck it out with us," said Boston Supt. Robert Spillane. "I can't see spending any money to bring people back when those funds could be used for our students."

Weaver thinks schools can accomplish more by expanding programming to the adult community, particularly because adult retraining has become such an

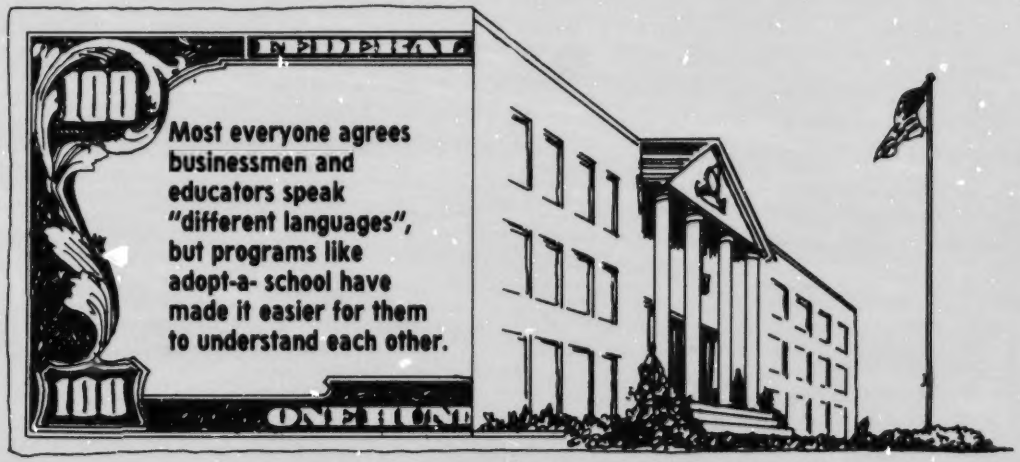
important issue.

Washington has done just that.

"Real estate is so expensive," Weaver said. "We have got to begin using our property to better advantage. That means keeping the schools open at night and, perhaps, finding use for them during the summer months."

Education: Whose Business Is It?

Adopt-A-School Program Sending Community Back Into Classrooms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Most everyone agrees businessmen and educators speak "different languages", but programs like adopt-a- school have made it easier for them to understand each other.
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ONE HUNDRED

Booker T. Washington High School takes youngsters without hope and gives them reason to try.

Graduates like Memphis schools Supt. Willie Herenton and NAACP executive director Benjamin Hooks have broken poverty's grasp and inspired others to do the same.

Booker T. Washington's principal, Mose Walker, has much to ponder when he considers the school's attributes. Still, he has no trouble choosing "No. 1."

"Federal Express is the best thing that has ever happened to Booker T. Washington and I mean that," he said. "It has had the most

telling effect than any kind of community agency or outside agency has ever had on the school —period."

What makes a successful air express company take an interest in "one of the few true inner-city schools?" A program called Adopt-A-School.

Memphis began pairing schools with businesses, churches and civic groups in 1979 under Herenton's direction. All but 30 of the 153 schools will have been adopted by the end of the school year.

The adopt-a-school program has brought businessmen into the schools and put students in business.

When Barbara Russell, project coordinator, considers its accomplishments, she doesn't speak of the thousands of dollars in donations or countless volunteer hours each year. The value, she says, is in the fact it brought "the community" back to school.

Ten years ago corporate-education programs were as scarce as blooms in February. Today, most major systems have a variation of the program or are starting one.

But questions have also arisen.

Wayne Walker, head of the business-schools partnership program in St. Louis, said teachers and principals under pressure to improve basic skills and test scores sometimes fail to see much point to the programs, and they object to the time it takes from classes.

That is one reason why St. Louis approaches school-business collaboration differently from most systems. Walker's office coordinates volunteer business projects, then offers the services to principals.

"Usually, the principals are cooperative. Except when we get around test time. Then they say they don't have time for it...A large part of my job is convincing principals and teachers of the merit."

Whether in St. Louis or Memphis, most everyone agrees businessmen and educators speak "different languages," and programs like adopt-a-school have made it easier for them to understand each other.

However, Pete Weaver, the attorney who heads corporate school relations in Washington, doubts whether communication really has improved. He believes too many schools are so wrapped up with "window-dressing" they haven't addressed the topics that need to be discussed.

"The schools are selling themselves short. They are letting the businesses get away with making some small contribution when they could be doing bigger and better things."

School-business partnerships have been a priority for Washington Supt. Floretta McKenzie because too many of her graduates have not been getting jobs.

When Weaver took over, he searched the country looking for innovative business-education projects and found little that impressed him. Interviews with corporate leaders were more successful, producing the idea of academic centers in computer science, pre-engineering, health, hotel and restaurant services, and business and finance.

"We looked at where the jobs were going to be and we looked at the kind of students those industries would need, then we identified the largest employers in those areas and started talking to them."

About 250 students — selected from citywide applications — are enrolled at the centers, which are scattered throughout the city. The students are in school about two hours longer than their peers — from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and they leave junior high a year early, starting high school classes in the 9th grade.

In Memphis, coordination between business and education is much mroe informal. Many businessmen here share the concerns of Washington businessmen and have been trying to make their voices heard.

Frank Maguire, outgoing vice-president of Federal Express, is one who feels schools have not kept pace with the working world.

"Why in a world of microcomputers would you continue to train students to fix calculators?" he asked.

Recently, a state task force appointed to study job skills concluded communication is not as effective as it could be. "There is insufficient interaction in Tennessee between business and educational leaders in design and delivery of occupational training programs which are responsive to changing industry trends and

skills," its report said.

Mrs. Russell believes Adopt-A-School will provide the foundation on which to build programs that will help coordinate the school curriculum's needs with those of business.

Though Washington's approach to business-education partnership has been lauded, it is not a cure all. Educators and businessmen warn such partnerships are new and should be approached with caution.

There is potential for great damage.

Schools could become training centers for businesses. That in itself may not seem so bad. But in towns dominated by one or two industries, schools could do a great disservice by providing such limited skills.

There is yet another, ironic drawback. Not only are businessmen seeking to lure away science and math teachers, they are now after business-minded superintendents and administrators. Herenton believes more will jump rank for the private sector, where pay is better and life more private. That, he said, is what he intends to do when he steps down in a couple of years.

Still, most people agree the potential good in business-education partnerships outweighs the bad. In the eyes of many, it is a necessity.

BOSTON — Education is for sale in this harbor town. Shop around. Choose from Harvard, Boston College or any of 41 other institutions of higher learning.

Education is threaded into the town's fabric. Such a relationship with academia gives credence to those who say Boston is "The Athens of America."

But Athens is in big trouble. The city that teaches some of the

world's brightest minds hasn't taught its own children very well. Nearly 30 per cent of the system's high school students find their textbooks too difficult to read.

Compact

Even more distressing to educators and businessmen is the fact nearly one of every two students who starts the ninth grade in the city's public schools will drop out.

"It's a crime," said John Gould of the Shawmut Corp. and executive director of a group of business leaders known as The Vault. "These kids drop out of life before

Seeks Salvation Of 'Athens Of America'

Education: Whose Business Is It?

they ever . . . get started."

In days of old, troubled towns looked to gods and the heavens for help. Bostonians looked to New York, where they found Robert 'Bud' Spillane — the seventh person in nine years to take a crack at the job.

When he arrived, one school committee member had been sent to jail. A second was under indictment and a third eventually resigned because of allegations of a busing kickback scheme.

The finances were in such a tangled web no one knew how many employes there were.

"The Boston school system had been termed a national disgrace by others. That is not my term but, in fact, it was," said the graying Spillane.

"We had overspent the budget by $31 million the year before I arrived. That in itself is not so terrible if you know what you are spending. But the guesses were they were overspending between $10 million and $50 million."

Spillane immediately began cleaning house. He reorganized personnel and tightened fiscal controls. Then he went to school, setting up a new curriculum and testing program and replacing 33 of 123 headmasters and principals.

The system still lacked public support, and Spillane decided such backup was crucial to his improvement plans. So he became town crier, taking his pitch on the banquet circuit and into corporate board rooms.

The troops amassed, responding

to his alarm. And that movement gave birth to The Boston Compact.

Spillane puts it this way:

"The students who stay in the community and who make up the largest percentage of the work force are the dropouts and the students who finish in the lower two-thirds of the class. We have to start judging our success not by the students who go on to college but by the ability of these students to carry out productive work."

The Boston Compact is an historic agreement in which the schools committed to improving the dropout rate and attendance rate and to increasing the number of college-bound graduates each year. In return, the corporate sector agreed to get 200 corporations to agree to furnish jobs — between 800 and 1,000 — to Boston High School graduates who number about 3,000.

Gould, a native of the one of thecity's poorer areas, said the city's 24 largest corporations, which sit on the coordinating committee, knew from the start they were talking about their future when they talked about Boston's public schools.

"It was never a question of could we afford to participate. We knew we could not afford not to participate," said Gould.

Government, business and educational leaders see the compact as the light at the end of the tunnel.

Not everyone sees brighter days ahead. This is not the first time such partnership programs have been tried in Boston. It is more like the third or fourth.

"The teachers are skeptical about the program," said Tom Hennessey, headmaster at Madison Park High School. "They are taking a wait and see attitude. These types of programs have been tried before."

The teachers are not the only skeptics. Tied to the Boston Compact are several new theories, such as the school-based management plan that will give principals more say in teacher assignments and in how their budgets should be spent.

Spillane, meanwhile, is enjoying national attention brought on by the compact. But he realizes his main goal is far beyond his grasp.

Spillane hopes one day public schools in the 'Athens of America' will open the gates for children, rather than holding them in place.

"Public education ought to give students a chance to make something out of their lives. It doesn't always do that. My goal is to make this a system that gives poor children a chance at a better life."

The Carolina Times
Durham, North Carolina

From School to Work: A Leap of Despair

Education '83:

A Special Edition Series

Publisher's Note: All Americans want to somehow live the good life, however the individual defines that.

For many black Americans, the good life includes social, political and economic equality of opportunity, the chance, as it were, to let the dreams of black Americans closely approximate the dreams of all Americans.

Two major ingredients dictate the transformation of dreams to reality — education and a job. These two ingredients are actually flip sides of the same coin. The education you have determines in large measure what type of jobs you can do.

Two generations ago, things were fairly simple. Go to school. Get a high school diploma and certain jobs were yours. Get a college degree and a whole new vista of jobs, careers, if you will, opened to you. Within the boundaries of American racism, the scenario was the same for blacks.

But recently, things have drastically changed.

According to the Dec. 13, 1982 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*, "A fresh diploma is no guarantee of employment."

In the same issue, in an article on employment, the magazine reported: "The weight of high unemployment is likely to fall most heavily on newer entrants into the workplace, college graduates looking for that first job, women and blacks."

Implicit in that prediction is that young people, particularly those between 17-22 years old, and particularly blacks are going to find it difficult to work now and into the future.

The figures bear out that prediction.

Teenage unemployment has always been higher than the overall unemployment rate, but in the past four years, the gap has been growing. In 1981, for example, the last year that complete figures are available, the jobless rate among the state's teenagers and young adults was just over 20 per cent. For blacks, the rate, again, almost doubled to just under 40 per cent.

Why?

The easy answer is that these young people don't have the experience to get the jobs, and don't have the education to get the experience. But the easy answer is not enough because a great many of these jobless youth, especially blacks have high school diplomas, and some of them hold college degrees.

Well, what is the solution? The sub-minimum wage? A new federal jobs program? We think not!

Because we believe that this issue of education and work is critical today and will be even more critical for the next 17 years as the country heads into Century 21, *The Carolina Times* decided to study this issue in depth.

With the help of a grant from the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, D.C., we sent our Executive Editor, Milton Jordan, on special assignment.

He has interviewed educational leaders from around the country, in North Carolina and in Durham. He has talked with trend experts, read dozens of reports and several recent books on the subject. He has spent several days, along with a carefully selected team of freelance writers he assembled, looking closely at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and the Durham schools, city and county. He has talked with leaders in the N.C. Department of Public Instruction and looked at the community college system as well. He has interviewed dozens of employers and personnel experts, plus quite a number of unemployed young people.

Out of all of this has come an in-depth, comprehensive, hard-hitting five-part Special Edition series: FROM SCHOOL TO

About the Author

MILTON JORDAN, a nationally known journalist with more than thirteen years media experience, is now Executive Editor of *The Carolina Times* in Durham, North Carolina. *The Carolina Times* is a sixty-year old black weekly newspaper that currently serves more than 300,000 regionally.

Jordan's journalism career began in Greensboro with *The Carolina Peacemaker*, followed by brief stints with *The Carolina Times* and *The Carolinian* in Raleigh. In 1970 Jordan became the first black reporter to work with *The Wilmington Star-News* in Wilmington. He later supervised a federally financed Rumor Control Clinic and managed a radio station in that city, as well as hosted a weekly television talk show. He went to Charlotte as an urban affairs reporter for the *Charlotte Observer* in 1974, and resigned in 1979 to open a consulting business.

For his study of education and work, Jordan interviewed education and business leaders from around the country, in North Carolina and Durham.

WORK: A LEAP OF DESPAIR.

Our investigation of this subject is not to produce another sing-song litany of doom and gloom. Rather, we want to identify causes, and suggest innovative solutions, pinpointing resources that can be brought to bear to effectuate those solutions.

We hope you will read this series carefully. We hope we will challenge you to understand the problem, first from a personal perspective, and then on a larger scale. We hope we will stir you to action to begin turning the problem around, because unemployed young people become unemployable adults.

Society can't survive a generation of non-workers. Technology won't save us from that!

—Vivian A. Edmonds, Publisher

Black Youth Joblessness Can Be Solved

They're everywhere!

They hang out, kill time, jam, party, play the video games, or worse.

They are our jobless youth!

Probably second only to the cancer of black-on-black crime, black youth unemployment gnaws greedily at our most valuable resource, our young people, our future.

Something must be done!

We simply cannot afford, and therefore must not allow, an entire generation of young blacks to drift into absentminded idleness. This nation simply cannot afford to squander resources that way.

Besides, in a highly sophisticated, technological society, unemployed young people are likely to become unemployable adults, middle-aged people and senior citizens, if they live that long.

But what can we do?

We think that black business operators have an obligation to address this problem directly and specifically.

There should be some discussion now between Durham's Black Merchants Association and the Durham Business and Professional Chain to develop a strategy to attack this problem, and to get every current black business operator, and every potential black business operator plugged into the strategy.

In the final analysis, all the philosophy, the discussion and hand-wringing about what the "guv'ment" has not done — or might do — is futile and silly. The bottom line is our young people must have jobs. The reality is we must supply those jobs.

There is more we can do.

We can begin seeing all young blacks as potential employees,

and we can take a personal interest in what they are doing now to prepare themselves to work for us in the future.

We can become concerned about their education, and by working closely with schools, including NCCU, try to see that they are getting the type of academic undergirding that will prepare them for what we will have for them to do when we hire them.

We can become concerned about their deportment, and constructively criticize deportment, dress and attitudes that, in our judgment, will not make them good employees for us.

In other words, we can put ourselves in the picture of their future, and if we do, we can help solidify our own future.

One of the most unfortunate things the older folks say about young blacks, is that the young people's attitude, deportment, dress and academic backgrounds were purposely developed so the young people can avoid working.

The Real World of Work

Inadvertently we have taught our young people some wrong principles about the world of work. The error has been created and magnified in the language of instruction and discussion that unfortunately disguises many basic principles and attitudes that one needs to be a successful worker.

Consider.

Habitually, we tell our young people about how they must study hard so they can get out of school and go get a job.

We tell them about some work being a good job and, by implication, that other work is a bad job.

We talk to them about a good salary, which by inference, produces a good lifestyle. Without saying it, we imply therefore that a salary less than that is a bad salary and produces a bad lifestyle.

We must begin telling our young people the truth. We must paint a clear picture for them of the real world of work.

Young people do not go to school, study hard and learn well to leave school and GET a job. Rather, they do all that to leave school and be of exemplary service to society. In other words, employers don't hire you because you need a job, they hire you because you, by exemplary service, can help improve their business effort.

Any salary is a good salary in exchange for exemplary service, because no company should ever be able to pay you what you are worth. If you are being paid what you are worth, then either you are cheating the employer, or you don't have any worth left for yourself.

Your lifestyle is not nearly as dependent upon the money you make as it is upon your attitude toward money, and the strategy you develop for using it.

Now here's the shocker!

Almost no successful person in business in America went into business to get rich. Rather, they went into business to provide a better service. Conversely, almost no successful employee is working today just for money. Rather, they are working to do the best job they can, to provide the most exemplary service they can. A big part of their success is that they enjoy what they are doing.

Substantial rewards in this country come directly through the world of work, and they come almost directly proportional to the degree of risk, the level of commitment and the value of your service.

Now that's the real world of work. It can be summed up in the following principles:

* It is built on a foundation of specific goals: personal, professional and societal.
* Preparation is a lifelong process.
* Growth is mandatory, or "work-death" (firing, etc.) soon follows.
* Salary is only a measure of your contribution to profitability.
* A positive attitude is the chief tool.
* A superior ability to get along with others lubricates the whole process.

A News Analysis

From School to Work A Leap of Despair

Thomas Turner, 22, desperately wants a job. He's been looking for more than a year. The results: nothing!

But Turner, a high school graduate, who also has a number of other problems, including an undesirable discharge from the Army and a drug-related court record, is not alone.

According to recent reports from the U.S. Department of Labor, more than 50 per cent of the nation's black youth — from 16 to 22 years old — want jobs and can't find them. That's more than 3.2 million young people, most of them males. They want to work. They need to work. But they can't find jobs.

In North Carolina, the statistics are just as dismal. In 1981, the latest year for which complete figures are available, the jobless rate among the state's teenagers and young adults was just over 20 per cent. For blacks, the rate, again, almost doubled, to just under 40 per cent.

State Job Service analysts expect the 1982 figures, due out in mid-April, to be even higher than 1981.

It is almost impossible to get a handle on the specific figures for Durham, but there is no reason to believe the picture is much better.

The obvious question is why?

One answer, of course, is that unemployment is up overall, hovering near 10 per cent for the total labor force. For blacks generally, the figure is about 22 per cent, more than double the overall unemployment rate.

But even a recession, slowly shading itself into a modest recovery, doesn't explain why half of America's young blacks can't find work.

As President Ronald Reagan and others are fond of saying, there are jobs to be had, citing, as they do, the heft of the classified employment pages in most of the nation's daily newspapers.

So why are so many young blacks not working?

"I want to work," explains Turner. "I want to do any kind of job. I can't find nothing."

Turner's not alone.

Cynthia Wilson, 19, who recently graduated from high school, wants a job.

"I've looked everywhere," she said. "I've tried everything. There just ain't no jobs out here. But I'm still looking."

Are there no jobs?

"Yes, I have vacancies and sometimes I give a kid who looks mature a break," explained one executive who asked not to be identified for fear that the adverse publicity would hurt his firm. "But frankly, I can't take the risk. I can't find enough kids who can read or write. Preposterous as that sounds, it's true...We can train people, but we can't teach reading or writing."

His assertion about not being able to find kids who can read, write, and by implication, compute well enough to earn and hold entry level jobs might sound preposterous, but this executive isn't the only one making the assertion.

The November 1982 issue of *Nation's Business* paints a bleak picture. "Even more critical, millions of American adults are functionally illiterate, and large numbers of youth are leaving school with woeful preparation for the world of work. Last summer (1981), the National Center for Educational Statistics reported a steady decline during the 1970s in the already low skill levels of American students in reading, writing, mathematics and science. It concluded that unless this trend is reversed, by 1990 between 900,000 and 2 million of the 2.4 million high school graduates coming into the work force by then will lack skills essential for entry-level employment."

This position was echoed by a federal task force on youth unemployment. After an intensive study of the problem, they described its significance, impact and possible solutions in the following findings.

* "Youth employment problems and opportunities are unevenly distributed. Without a bold new initiative, the 80s are likely to exacerbate these inequities.

* Many of our young people may not have the basic reading, writing and arithmetical skills necessary to get and hold a decent job.

* Employers sort out applicants based on work experience and reliability — on a resume. There is a shortage of job opportunities for young people who seek to prove themselves to build this resume.

* Young people need information about jobs and careers; but they also need support and assistance from community networks during the increasingly difficult transition from school to work. Too many young people will enter the labor market of the 80s with outdated expectations. They will be unaware of new industries and opportunities for education and they will be unprepared for a rapidly changing workplace.

* A partnership is needed to

serve our young people — business, schools, labor unions, community-based organizations and government. No single institution created the dilemma we face today; no single institution can cure it."

If this last finding is true, then it seems logical to reason that only by correctly analyzing the role that each institution played in the developing the problem can the frightening trend be reversed.

According to most experts interviewed for this series, the relevant institutions that helped set the problem are the schools, business and industry, society generally, and parents.

First stop, the public schools!

The cacophony of public opinion about public schools is at best confusing. On the one hand, you have employers and others who say the schools are doing a terrible job, that they are letting students, particularly urban blacks slide through 12 years of "mis-education", releasing them into society, "with woeful preparation for the world of work."

On the other hand, a recent Gallup Poll on public education shows that 70 per cent of the public believe the public schools are excellent, above average or average. Only about 14 per cent said they believe public schools are below average, and only five per cent said they think the schools are failing.

Yet in this same poll, most people — 69 per cent — said they think the biggest problems with the schools are lack of discipline, lack of proper financial support and drug use. Only 33 per cent as compared to 42 per cent said they think public school curriculum needs to be changed to meet today's needs. The largest group said they think the current curriculum adequately meets the needs of today's society.

The rather bright view from a public opinion poll notwithstanding, there is something wrong in our public schools.

Teachers know it:

"Discipline is probably my worst problem," explained one high school teacher in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System, the state's largest urban system. "How can I teach these kids high school math when most of them can't read the problems? They are not interested. They don't see any connection between anything I say and anything important in their lives. So they misbehave. What can I do? Sometimes it's like I'm speaking a foreign language."

Principals know it:

"Over the past several years," said Richard Cansler, principal of Charlotte's West Charlotte High School, "schools have been asked to do too much. When integration came, the schools were expected to make it work, and to the extent that it's working, kids have done it. Parents have not made it work. As a matter of fact, some parents on both sides were some of the clearest obstacles to it working. But in the process, to some extent we have gotten away from purely education."

High ranking administrators of public education know it:

"As society has changed from an agrarian to an industrial, to a quasi-technological economy, the change has reduced the correlation between what is teachable and what is needed to work," explained Dr. Dudley Flood, assistant superintendent of the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. "After eight to ten years of doing what we're doing now, there is no documentation that the present strategy works in getting people from school to work. We actually need to develop a different set of strategies for helping students make that transition."

People to plot the trends of this country, who gaze into data-filled "crystal balls" to determine what America will be 20 years from now know it:

"The mismatch that we see developing," said Michael H. Annison, vice president of the Naisbelt Group, "is between society's desires and its institutions...and the institution that is

most clearly out of step with what society is becoming is the public school systems of this country."

So our public schools are not cutting it. Everyone of any import seems to know that, though there are various interpretations of how serious the problems are. But why?

How did our schools lose touch, get out of line, become breeding grounds for inefficiency?

In his 1982 book *The Trouble with America's Schools*, Gene I. Maeroff, nationally renowned education writer for *The New York Times*, put the problem in this perspective:

"...the blame ought to be spread to where it belongs — to lawmakers who heap burden after burden upon the schools, to judges who interpret statutes as though schools had endless resources, to public officials who

harass schools with regulatory minutiae, to teachers unfit to teach, to principals without leadership skills, to superintendents who ignore problems, to school board members who forget that they represent the public, to taxpayers who keep school systems on starvation diets,and to parents who evince more interest in the daily television listings than in the events of their children's schoolday."

So in the words of that famous proverb, providing you accept Maeroff's assessment, "we have seen the enemy and the enemy is us."

It seems then that maybe all aspects of this society failed in regard to public schools, particularly urban schools, and that the problem of improving students' abilities to make the transition from school to work must be viewed in the context of a societal failure, rather than simply a failure of public schools.

Interviews for this series indicate that generally people recognize and accept that the problem with schools, the problem with high youth unemployment, especially black youth unemployment, is a societal problem. Almost everyone, however, puts different priorities on how the problem developed and what is needed to solve it.

Many teachers and administrators say, for example, that the biggest segment of this problem is the fact that parents show differing levels of commitment to their children's education.

"Most white students normally have stronger advocates in the home, more aggressive pressure to stay in school and make good grades," said Sam Heywood, an area assistant superintendent in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system. "Many black students have not had strong advocates for learning in the home. Many black parents have not been aggressive in putting pressure on kids to stay in school and make good grades."

Educators, particularly high school teachers and administrators, say, almost to the person, that even those parents who are closely involved with their children's education during elementary school, "dropout" at high school.

Most of these educators because of how they prioritize the problem, tend to prioritize the solution this way:

* Parents must become more aggressive in supporting education, and preparing their children for learning.

* Educators must become more aggressive in insisting that they be allowed to teach, without being hampered by other obligations, such as special feeding programs, etc.

* Society must be willing to pay whatever this increased aggressiveness on the parts of parents and educators might cost.

Parents, of course, have a different priority.

Some of them think that schools should have a more strict, more "basics" oriented approach to education. These parents insist on what they call "traditional schools.

Other parents say that the traditional approach does not allow for individual and cultural difference. Many of them opt for what is called an "Opened School" approach.

As these parents think about solutions, they tend to opt for increased efficiency in the schools, a better end result, without a great increase in cost.

For example, the Gallup Poll quoted earlier shows that when asked what should be cut from local school operations, presumably to increase efficiency, almost three-quarters of the public school parents opted for a reduction in the number of school administrators.

But society as a whole does not buy either one of these views, these rankings of the problems in public education.

According to John Nasbitt, president of the Nasbitt Group,

one of the nation's foremost research firms, society is more interested, has as its top priority, innovation in public education, rather than either a discussion of its problems, or a systematic approach to solving whatever the problems are.

For example, the Trend Report, published by the Nasbitt Group, shows that in America's newspapers, the institutions probably more attuned than any other to America's thinking, articles about educational innovation have increased to 43 per cent of all education items, while articles about the problems of teachers have decreased from 22 to 14 per cent.

So the conclusion, though clear, is fairly complex.

Thomas Turner, Cynthia Wilson, and the millions of other young people who want work are caught in the morass of a mission that apparently has become confused with dozens of issues that no one could have possibly considered when the concept of a "public education for all who can learn" was developed in this country. They are also caught in a vortex of change as this society shifts from an industrial economy to an information/service economy. But more importantly, they are shouldered with the burdensome responsibility of overcoming handicaps that are not totally their own doing, and at the same time becoming an integral part of the "new" America so they can help insure that their children won't get caught in the same trap.

A News Analysis

We All Know What To Do But No One Knows How In The World of School

Everyone agrees that public education needs to be improved.

Everyone agrees that parents with children in the public schools need to be more involved in public education.

Everyone agrees that public schools must be more accountable, must produce a better trained, more responsible applicant for the world of work.

While everyone agrees on what must be done, almost no one agrees on how to do it.

Today's world of public education is a world rife with philosophical differences, arguments on methodology and quite a number of disagreements on just what role education should play in society today and tomorrow, and how it should play that role. And that's just the argument among educators.

Outside the schools, many of the same arguments that rage inside the schools occupy a lot of discussion time. But there are also some other discussions as well, such as: integration versus neighborhood schools, tax support versus proprietary management, education versus social services, and competency versus pure education.

That's not all. People who run the world of work have their own arguments about the schools. Many of them claim the schools are doing a bad job and can't do any better. Some others say the schools are doing a bad job, but with enough money could do better. There's just not enough money. Still others say public education is a "societal dinosaur" that will be buried in the cold changes that trends indicate are ahead for this country.

"This country is changing in ways that will have significant impacts on everyone

in this country," thundered Michael Annison, of the Naisbett Group during a Washington, D.C. presentation to educators and journalists. "And the institution most out of step with what's happening and what that means in this country is the public school system of this country."

On the other end of the spectrum, Ms. Page McCollough, coordinator of the Parent Involvement Project of the Durham-based Atlantic Center for Research in Education, says:

"I think schools have been fulfilling their mission very well, and that mission is to teach people the way things are, and to help them accept the way things are without asking too many questions."

Those two statements represent what can be considered the boundaries of the philosophical spectrum regarding the nation's public schools. One, Annison's, says public schools are unwieldy institutions, currently incapable of making the proper adjustments quickly enough to be an important part of the developing trends he sees on the horizons. The other, Ms. McCollough's, contends that the public schools are the fountains of conditioning that program each successive generation to blend with the current system rather than seek to improve it.

Somewhere between those two points fall all of the other arguments.

Consider the argument between traditional versus "open" education.

"What we try to accomplish here," explained Bruce Owen, principal at Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system, "is, by having a specific level of control and structure, to develop a strong academic program that attempts to give students the very best foundation upon which to build."

Owen, who has been principal at the school since its opening six years ago, also noted that what really makes this type of educational approach work is the attitude and perception that parents have about their children.

"Parents have to be committed to this approach in education," Owen said, "because one of the keys to making this traditional method work is the level of consistent expectations that students get at home and at school."

The key question is does it work?

The answer from Owen: "We don't know."

Apparently, neither in Charlotte nor any place else that has the traditional and "open" approach working side-by-side, no one has studied the question of which students do better in junior high, or the middle school grades, high school, and make the school to work transition more easily.

What Owen does know is that his students' math and reading scores have been climbing steadily since the school opened. For example, in the 1977-78 school year, first graders scored 1.9 in reading and 2.0 in math. During the 81-82 school year, first graders at Elizabeth scored 2.3 in reading and 2.5 in math. By way of comparison, consider Elizabeth's second graders during the 77-78 school year. They scored 3.5 and 3.3 on reading and math, respectively. Many of those same students, in the sixth grade during the 81-82 school year, scored 9.0 in reading and 8.7 in math which means that while second graders these students were about one grade ahead of their level, but as sixth graders, these youngsters are almost three grades ahead of their level.

It is not clear what, if anything, this proves about the quality of traditional education over the so-called open education approach, because Owen also notes that students' I.Q.s range from 103 to 110.

"It is clear to us," Owen explained, "that we are pulling our students from the upper middle to upper class families, black and white."

On the other side of the question, Mrs. Francis Maske, principal of the Irwin Open elementary school in Charlotte, says: "Our emphasis here is to enjoy school and learn. We believe that school doesn't have to be rigid for learning to take place. We also stress to students that they must assume some responsibility for thier own learning."

Continuing, Mrs. Maske notes that in the "open" approach to education, the teacher is more a facilitator of learning than the absolute authority on a subject. And in at least one respect, she says much the same thing that Owen said about the traditional education approach.

"The continuing input from parents is critical to the success of this approach," Mrs. Maske said. "We see our job as a three-way contract, between the student, the school and the parents."

Even when they talk about objectives, Mrs. Maske and Owen sound almost

alike: "We've got to make sure," Mrs. Maske explained, "that we are preparing them (students) for out there (the world of work) and not in here (the classroom). When students from our program get to junior and senior high school, they should be more self-directed and willing to take more responsibility for their actions and their decisions."

But does it work? The answer from Mrs. Maske: "We don't know."

Again, it's a case of no one really trying to determine if students who spend their elementary school years in an "open" school atmosphere are really more self-directed and willing to take more responsibility for their actions and their decisions.

One reason that no one seems to attack the question of the end results is because there is still some disagreement, even among educators, about the role of the schools. Do they reflect society, or help direct society?

"To a great extent," said Dr. Dudley Flood, an assistant superintendent in the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, "schools can only respond to the perceived need of the parents, regarding their children."

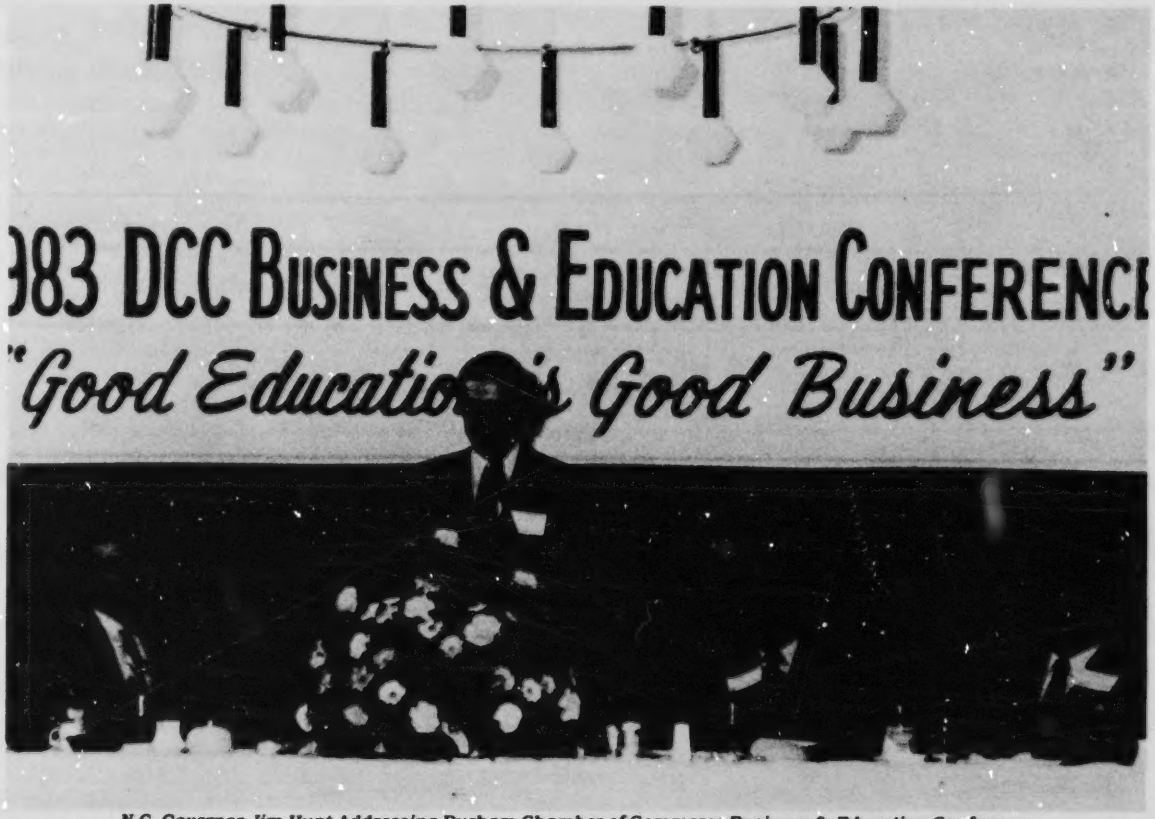
What that means, according to Dr. Flood's elaboration, is that schools will try to respond to the prevailing philosophy in society regarding the coming generations. For example, if the prevailing philosophy is that "my child should have it better than I had it," then schools will emphasize going to college over going to work after high school.

But Dr. Flood also points out that schools simply can't change fast enough to keep up.

"In any given 20-year cycle," Dr. Flood said, "curriculum modification in response to what trends appear to be will be about ten years behind what the reality is in the workplace."

If that's the case, the educators who contend that they are teaching tomorrow's work force could well be whistling in the dark.

"Our goal, as I see it," explained Dr. Deanne Crowell, assistant superintendent for curriculum and staff development in



N.C. Governor Jim Hunt Addressing Durham Chamber of Commerce Business & Education Conference

the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, "is to have our students ready to have a salable skill when they graduate from high school."

In the same breath, Dr. Crowell also says that for the schools to accomplish that goal now and into the future, there must be a massive retraining of teachers.

"For public schools to be on the cutting edge of change," said Dr. Crowell, "we need people who are futurists, people who will think beyond next year."

If you take Dr. Flood's comment in connection with Dr. Crowell's remarks, the real question is, even with future thinkers, can the public school system reform itself quickly enough to get in step with the trends?

"Well, if it can't," said Annison, during an interview in Washington, "people will find alternative methods of getting the education they need."

Alternative education is already a trend sweeping the country. According to the College in a report entitled: *New Directions for a Learning Society,* of the 58.4 million people educated in this country during 1978, 46 million of them got that learning some place other than in school. Examples of alternative learning systems include: community organizations, business and industry, professional associations, churches, synagogues and government services.

So in the final analysis, the world of school today appears to be a world without a clearcut mission, or a clearly defined method of achieving a mission.

So what is the bottom line?

Donald N. Frey, chairman and chief executive officer, Bell & Howell Company, writing in a recent issue of *American Education,* cast the bottom line this way: "I have no doubt that as a society we must hold high the objective of education for the whole man, but if the whole man can't get a job, it's pretty specious to talk about enriching his life."

Despite Problems, There Are Good Schools

In recent years, the nation's schools have taken it right on their educational chins.

Complaints abound about violence in the classroom, social promotions and high school graduates who can't read, write or compute well enough to get the average entry level job.

Arguments still rage about desegregation in the schools, and most parents — black and white — don't like their children taking long bus rides to and from school.

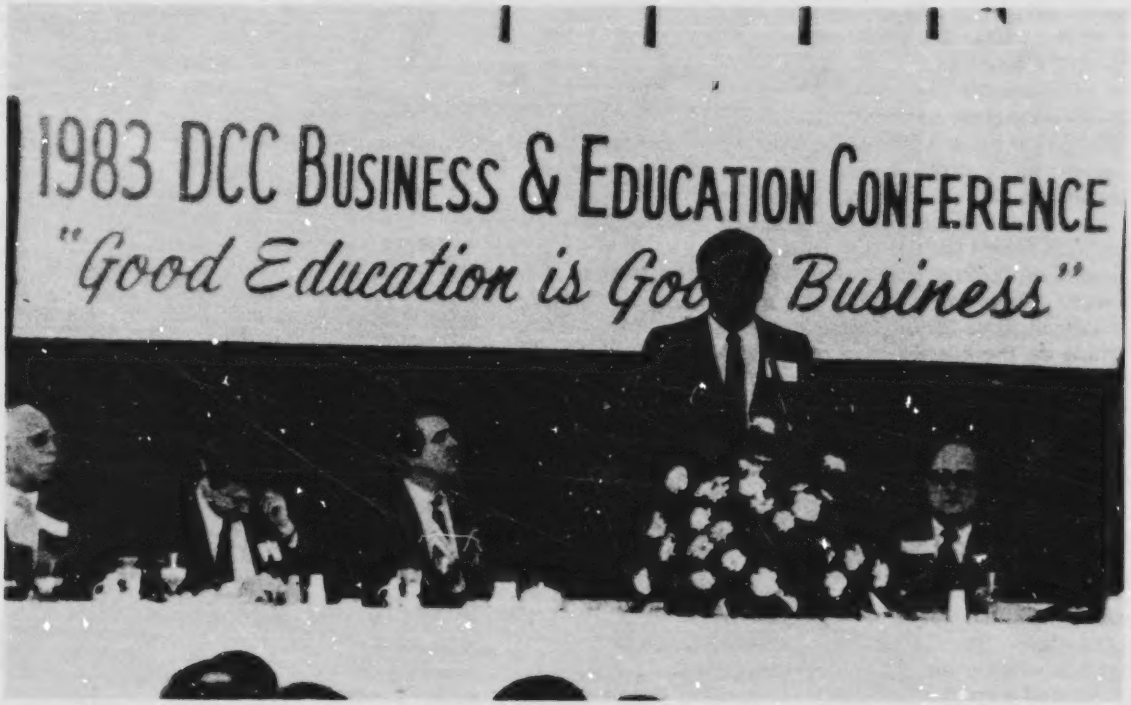
But for all of their problems, there are public schools that are trying to get a handle on the future, trying to overcome various obstacles and move themselves closer in line with what business and industry need.

A good example is the predominantly black public school system in the nation's capital.

When schools opened there for the current academic year, D.C. Schools Superintendent, Ms. Floretta McKenzie, had forged one of an ever-increasing number of school-business partnerships.

Now ninth graders in eight Washington public schools have begun studying career areas such as business and finance, communications, engineering professions, health professions and hotel management and culinary arts.

These programs are almost totally underwritten by area corporations that also help develop the curriculum, loan executives to do some teaching, and give school teachers summer internships to familiarize them with the world of work outside of the classroom. Some of the corporations involved in this program include Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Capitol Hill Hospital, D.C. Bankers Association, General Motors, IBM, PEPCO, the



Dr. Cleveland Hammonds, Superintendent of Durham City Schools

Private Industry Council, Howard University Hospital and the Hyatt Regency, among others.

In explaining why she put this partnership together, Ms. McKenzie says: "In spite of technical innovations, schools tend to rely primarily on paper and pencil methods of learning — the same techniques used for more than 100 years. To close the technology gap and prepare students for the realities of the 21st century, schools must call upon these segments of society that already have their eyes focused on the future: business and industry."

Under the D.C. program, students spend half of each school day getting a concentrated dose of basic education — the 3Rs — and they spend the other half either studying their career area, or working in it.

"The experience I'll get here will really help me when I have to go and find a job," said Antoinette Gillis, a ninth grader in the business and finance program. "The work here is hard, but I know it'll help me later on."

But the emphasis on early career education, even the old and tried vocational education route isn't the only thing happening in the D.C. schools worthy of note.

There is also a renewed emphasis on

academic excellence, and reluctance to excuse failure because a student is either black, or comes from a poor family, or both.

"Here, we believe every kid can learn," explained James Curry, principal at Woodson Senior High School, "And we expect them to learn a sense of self-worth, solid values and dignity."

Woodson, now in its 11th year, is built practically in the middle of five apartment complexes of federally subsidized housing.

Most of its 1800 students come from those apartments.

"We know that many of our students come to school with problems that many students don't have," Curry continued. "We recognize that, and we try to deal with those problems, but we don't let the students use these problems as excuses. We have an unwritten code of teacher/student interaction here. Every adult is a teacher of children, from the principal to the janitor. Every child is expected to give adults respect and to learn from them."

Woodson is recognized throughout the Washington area as a good high school, one of the better ones in the district, and a study of its methods shows that one of the principles of a good school is sensitive, humane, but firm discipline.

"There are certain things we will not tolerate at this school," Curry said. "The students know what they are, and they know what happens if they do them."

Discipline is not the only prerequisite for a good school.

High expectations for student achievement is also a measure of a good school.

In his book *Making Schools Work*, Robert Benjamine, a veteran education reporter with *The Baltimore Sun*, reported a conversation with a teacher in one of Chicago's best schools, in one of the city's toughest school districts.

"The first thing is you can't waste any time at all," explains Mrs. (Maggie) Thomas, a tall, thin black woman so strongminded about the way children should be taught she'd send shivers up the spines of most of her colleagues across the country. "You don't want to leave time for talking, time for anything. If there's nothing on the boards or on their desks for them to do when they walk in, that's just lost time. Kids can't start by themselves. The average child likes the teacher to be organized. The average child works because something's expected, because there's a goal. I set goals for these kids, and I tell them what I expect of them."

All relevant research shows that high expectations for student achievement, firm but sensitive discipline form the cornerstone of a good school.

But there are other factors as well.

One of them is a strong principal, with topnotch leadership abilities, and the knack of motivating people to do their best.

"A strong principal is the key to a good school in my judgement," said Dr. Cleveland Hammonds, superintendent of Durham City Schools. "If you have a weak principal, even excellent teachers won't do their best and the students will suffer. But if you have strong and positive leadership, especially in academic matters, from the principal, then even average teachers will produce outstanding results."

Other items clearly identifiable in good schools include:

* School-wide emphasis on basic skills instruction, which entails agreement among the professional staff that instruction in the basics is the primary goal of the school.
* A system for monitoring and assessing pupil performance which is tied to instructional objectives.
* Continual staff training on a schoolwide basis to help teachers stay abreast of changes and developing trends.

That, then, raises the question if the factors that make up a good school are known, and if they can be achieved, then why aren't there more good public schools?

"The schools can't improve themselves by themselves," says Dr. Dudley Flood, assistant superintendent in the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. "It can't be done in isolation. Parents must demand good schools. Business and industry must help them make the change, and governmental agencies must work hard to enhance the progress."

Then, how does a good school get started?

"Changes in education will never happen at the top of the system," explained Michael Annison, vice president of the Naisbett Group, a nationally known research company. "Change in this country, and that's particularly true of education, happens at the local level, and filters to the top of the system."

Young, Black and Unemployed You Must Shoot For A Job

In many ways, finding a job in today's rapidly changing society is much like trying to pull off a successful moon shot.

The economy, like the moon, is a self-contained entity, moving in a rather predictable orbit at a dizzying rate of speed.

You, then, young (16-22), black and unemployed, are the missile. Somehow, you must aim yourself at the economy, and fire yourself into orbit, which is analagous with job hunting, at just the right speed and trajectory to hit the economy at just the right spot, the spot most suited to your skills and abilities.

Two things are immediatley obvious in this analogy.

* If you aim at the economy where it is today, you will miss, because at the speed it is moving, the economy changes before you can complete the job application.

* To be able to hit the economy at any place at all, you must have skills and abilities.

Now that brings us to the other problems you have, problems that, using the moon shot analogy, can be likened to trying a moon shot with number two fuel oil.

Chances are, you are the product of an urban school, and if you are, then chances are very good that you are deficient in what one Charlotte-Mecklenburg school principal described as "The chief weakness of public schools."

"We are not doing a real good job of teaching students how to think," said Mrs. Frances Maske, principal at the Irwin Open School in Charlotte. "In order to prepare students for the world of work, particularly for tomorrow's jobs, we're

going to have to do a much better job of teaching them how to make critical analysis, and better comprehension skills...the thinking skills I call them."

In analyzing the skills that you need to successfully hit this moving target — work — with a moving target — you — Mrs. Maske is right on the button.

Consider what Alfred E. Osborne, Jr., director of the MBA program at UCLA's Graduate School of Management, said during a meeting of the Black Enterprise Board of Economic Advisors.

"Blacks ought to get out of businesses in which America doesn't have a competitive advantage," Osborne said, as reported in the March 1983 issue of *Black Enterprise*. "It is clear that our competitive advantage is in thoughtware — research and development-intensive, high-skill activities."

But that's not the only problem that you bring to the workplace, to the task of trying to hit work, that elusive moving target.

"One of the key elements of a successful work experience is attitude," explained Tom White, director of the local Private Sector Initiative Program, a federally funded program, operated by the Durham Chamber of Commerce. The program concentrates on placing its trainees in private industry, rather than in public service jobs. "A good attitude is hard to define. But most times it boils down to what a person is willing to do, and how enthusiastic they are about the job."

But the top administrator in the Durham City Schools says that in many instances the attitudes of many young blacks are seriously off target.

"Something very seriously wrong has happened to us about our attitude toward learning and work," said Dr. Cleveland Hammonds, superintendent of the Durham City Schools in a recent interview. "A lot of our young people seem to feel that the world owes them something. They don't seem willing to push as hard for something worthwhile. They seem to be more concerned about the quick payoff than they are about long term success."

To illustrate his point, Hammonds tells a story about a rookie football player some years ago who played for the then Minnesota Vikings. On a crucial play, the rookie caught a pass, broke into open field, and was headed for a touchdown. About 10 yards from the goal line, he held the ball high in the air, and began high stepping toward the goal. But about five yards from paydirt, the rookie was tackled, fumbled the ball, and the other team recovered.

"Just like that rookie," Dr. Hammonds said, "I think we started celebrating too soon.

"In the 60s when more jobs became available for blacks, I think too many of us allowed our children to believe that we had arrived, that we didn't have to continue to scratch for progress. Well, now they know."

But there is yet one more problem, a huge one.

"Far too many of our young people try to get jobs without being able to communicate well enough to be successful," said Tanya Johnson, a counselor with the Edgemont Community Center. "Somehow, we must impress upon these young adults that not only must they learn to speak well, but they must also learn to write well.

And so there you are: the missile. You are what you must aim at the world of work, and somehow hit a moving target.

Reviewing the characteristics that you bring to this task, we can easily surmise that you might not find a job. Consider:

* You are 16-22 years old and black.
* You are unemployed.
* You lack the education and training that you'll need to compete in the crowded job market.
* Your attitude about work is somewhat off-key.
* Your communication skills are less than top drawer.

While it might be true that all society shares some of the blame for your being less than an effective "missile," their recognition of that blame and efforts to change it won't help you much.

If you're going to get a job, turn this morass around, you're going to have to do most of the work yourself.

But first, let's consider the target you're trying to hit.

Local Schools Are Moving, But... There's Much To Be Done

Okay, here's a quick quiz on local education. Answer yes or no.

• Durham City Schools do an adequate job of preparing students for the world of work.

• Durham County Schools do an adequate job preparing students for the world of work.

• Neither school system does a good ob preparing students for the world of work.

• I don't know.

Answers to those questions are likely to range from one end of the spectrum to the other, depending upon whom you ask, and under what circumstances. But to the extent that the two public schools systems, and their clients — the public — follow national trends, local educators will answer the first two quesitons "yes."

Local business operators will answer the third question, "yes."

Parents will answer the fourth question, "yes."

Therein lies the problem!

Public education has been largely unable to develop a concrete concensus of mission, despite the important role it plays in the lives of almost every citizen in an area, one way or the other.

"Public education responds to the perceived needs of the parents," said Dr. Dudley Flood, assistant superintendent of Public Instruction. "In almost any given 20 year cycle, the curriculum will be modified according to what the trends appear to be. But even at that, schools are always five to ten years behind the trends."

But why?

"Schools," explained Dr. Cleveland Hammonds, superintendent of Durham City Schools, are a reflection of community concerns, attitudes and morality."

So, if you take what Dr. Flood says and connect it with what Dr. Hammonds says, the conclusion is inescapable.

• Schools are behind the trends mostly because parents are behind the trends, and have not given public education the proper marching orders to catch up.

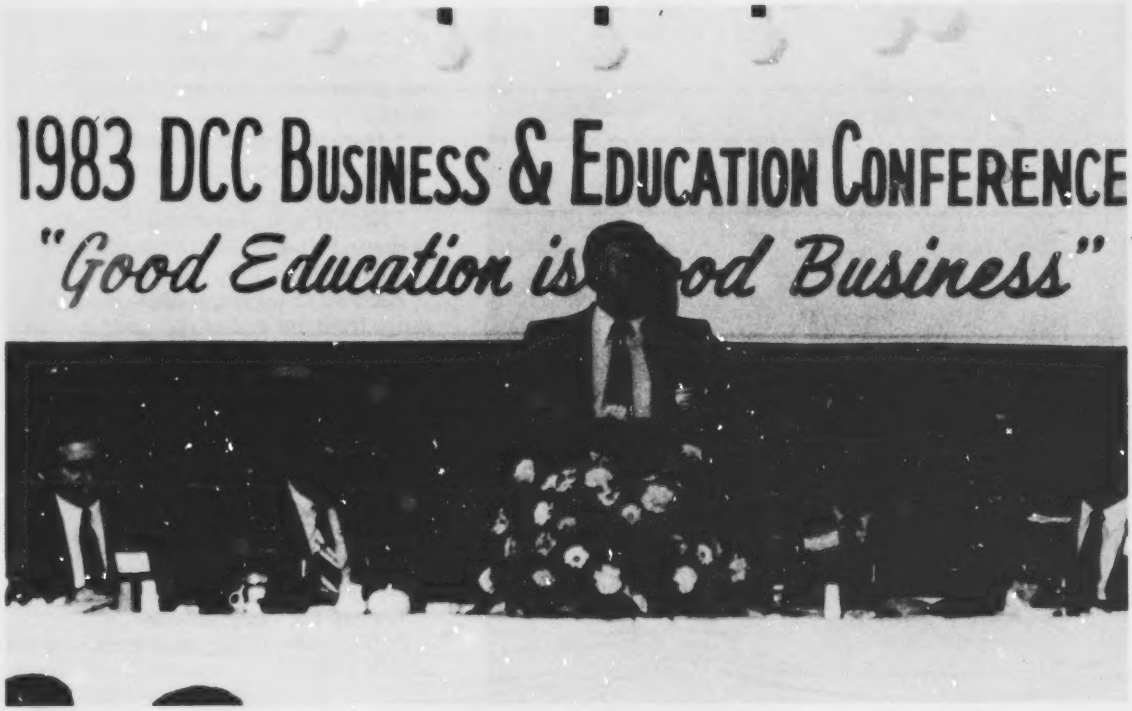
All of that, of course, raises another question: Why are parents behind?

"I think that most of the problems public education deals with can be traced directly to the breakdown of the family," said Spencer Wynn, principal at East End Elementary School, and a 35-year veteran educator in the city system. "Children today come from younger families, most of whom grew up in the period of permissiveness in the 60s, and they are often dominated by other outside interests, rather than their children. Many of these kids today suffer from a basic lack of home guidance."

Where, then, does this problem, uncorrected, lead?

A recent report by the Child Advocacy Commission of Durham indicates that problems in the home often lead to truancy in school, that more often than not leads to students dropping out. In their study, conducted in 1981. The Commission found the following:

• When the committee analyzed the records of 209 truant students who were in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades in 1978-79, they documented that over three-fourths of these students had dropped out



of school altogether by 1981-82.

* Most of these students dropped out in the ninth grade at age 15 or 16.

Then what?

According to most crime studies, more than 60 per cent of the youthful offenders arrested and imprisoned are school dropouts. According to U.S. Department of Labor statistics, well over half of unemployed youth are either dropouts, or young people who barely graduated.

This is obviously the vicious cycle that public education finds itself in. Students who do poorly in school often tend to become parents of children who do poorly in school, and the cycle continues unabated, but with the problems costing more with each passing year, and causing more headaches.

Is there anything public schools can do? Ms. Lanier Rand Fonvielle, a staffer with the Child Advocacy Commission, says

yes.

"What are schools for," she asks rhetorically. "They are to teach. Therefore, I believe that teachers must be trained to teach proper behavior, to teach an appreciation for education, and give children a choice between their home environment and something better, if the home environment is not conducive to a successful school experience."

Not all educators agree that the schools should take over the parents' role of teaching proper behavior, if the parent abdicates that role. Some say schools should not have to deal with those types of children. National studies are currently underway that basically would eliminate those children from the regular classroom and track them into some other type of program where misbehaving does not get in the way of education.

But all is not doom and gloom on the local public school front. There are some highlights. There are some indications that people are interested in trying to do something to turn the situation around.

For example, the local schools have an active Adopt-A-School program. This program brings business operators in contact with individual schools with specific needs that the business operator can fulfill.

There are also community education programs, designed to get parents and the general public more involved with the school systems, and to help them better understand how they can help the schools.

Academically, test scores have been on a slow but steady climb in both city and county schools, and the county schools pride themselves at having one of the highest passing rates on the Competency Test in the state.

But for all of the superlatives, the changes, the improvements, the things that educators point to as indicators of a job well done, there is still much, much more to do.

"Our attitude is that we have to reach out to parents and get them involved in their children's education," explained Dr. Hammonds. "Then we have to convince the students to look at life in a long range way, rather than being sold on the idea of instant gratification. Finally, we have to make sure that all educators have a commitment to educational excellence, and who are willing to spend themselves in support of that commitment."

In this task, the public schools are not without some rather formidable allies, professionals and agencies who are also committed to the concept of students being able to make a successful transition from school to work.

One such agency is MDC in Chapel Hill.

MDC, headed by George Autry, has been monitoring and running school-to-work projects for more than ten years now. Currently, they are operating several such programs, such as the Job Readiness Training (JRT), and Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG).

In the JRT program, which is in its second year of operation in Edgecombe County Schools, the emphasis is on working with high school seniors who are not planning to go to college, and who have not received any vocational education in high school. These students spend half of their time in the program in the classroom

learning specific details about the world of work, and their role in it. They are taught how to crystalize career goals and are also given information on motivation and how to build self-confidence. The other half of their time is spent on a job, in a training slot, learning to apply the principles of the classroom in the world of work.

The JRT program works closely with employers in an area, assessing the skills needed for jobs that will be available, and then making sure that students in the programs have those specific skills for those specific jobs.

In many respects, the JAG program, which originated in Delaware about a decade ago, incorporates the same training principles. The major difference is that JAG is run by what a MDC staffer called "a conspiracy of power."

Based in Washington, the JAG program has a board of directors that includes five governors, as well as Vice President George Bush, and former Vice President Walter Mondale. The emphasis here is the use of power to alter certain facets of the workplace to make it more conducive for young people to enter.

The emphasis is not on lowering the standards in the workplace, but on opening doors.

The MDC role in all of this is to study these problems, and determine in a detailed way how and why they work, and then develop ways of replicating the models in other areas. The MDC involvement is based on one obvious principle:

"We can't really expect the schools to solve all the problems they face by themselves," explained Ms. Miriam Snelling, a MDC staffer who works with the JRT program. "The people in the public schools system know what the problems are, but they need some outside help to implement solutions..."

But in addition to help from agencies such as MDC, local schools also need support from the local business community.

"I think we are headed in the right direction in that respect," said Sam Bell, an executive with General Telephone Company, and a member of the Education Task Force of the Durham Chamber of Commerce. "But the business community needs to help out in more ways than just giving the schools money or equipment. Business people need to emphasize the need for a good grounding in the basics."

Thus, in the final analysis, it all comes back to the basics.

America is changing today in ways unparalleled in its history, but historically, changes in America have been unparalleled in its history at the time the changes occurred. And educators, business people, and all other experts agree that what helped the nation adapt to and master previous changes was a solid foundation in the basics of education: reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic.

And how do you teach the basics?

Mrs. Roxie Stewart, a first grade teacher at East End Elementary School, viewing the question from her 33 years in the classroom, summed it up this way:

"You encourage them," she said. "Your motivate them, and you let them know what you expect. And then you have to work with them patiently until they accomplish it."

That's the formula, no matter what new and creative programs are developed according to veteran educators. If effort is not based on that formula, it won't work. But they also all agree that the success of that formula begins in the home, is magnified in the schools, and translated into profit in the world of work.

El Observador
San Jose, California

Latino Youth Who Don't Finish High School

A Three-Part Series *By Jose Antonio Burciaga*

45 percent of Latinos don't complete school

Last year at age 15, Juan, eldest of five children, left high school to help his family financially.

School had never attracted Juan. Many times he felt uncomfortable if not inadequate in the classroom. Now he would no longer worry about school or money to help his family.

A year later, Juan sought further stability and decided to marry. The reasons for his not completing high school are not that simple.

Some would classify Juan a "dropout" while others would say he was a "push-out."

In 1964, a U.S. Office of Education handbook defined the only word they recognized: "A dropout is a pupil who leaves school for any reason except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies and without transferring to another school . . . "

There were no exceptions for the U.S. Office of Education. A dropout was a dropout; death was the only justification for leaving school. As they saw it, the individual was to blame, not the school system.

CRACKS IN THE SYSTEM

With the advancement of educational technology and civil rights movements in the late sixties, the educational pipeline

About the Author

JOSE ANTONIO BURCIAGA is a writer and former editor for *El Observador*, a San Jose, California, weekly newspaper serving a large Indo-Hispanic community. He is also a frequent contributor to Hispanic Link, a nationally syndicated column appearing in over 200 newspapers across the country.

Originally from El Paso, Texas, Burciaga graduated from the University of Texas at El Paso with a Bachelor of Arts Degree. He did graduate work through Antioch University and also studied at Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C., and at the San Francisco Institute of Art.

Burciaga is the author of two books of poetry, and has published widely in various poetry and short story anthologies and literary magazines.

In 1982, Burciaga was awarded the Journalist of the Year honor by the San Jose Chapter of the American G.I. Forum, an award given to the Indo-Hispanic journalist who has made the strongest impact on the community.

was found to leak: especially Indo-Hispanics.

Attempts to repair those leaks through affirmative action programs, special ethnic study programs, open admissions, recruiting Blacks, Chicanos and other underrepresented groups only slightly improved educational opportunities for these groups.

In 1980 a conservative political wind swept across the nation. The Reagan Administration severely cut the federal educational budget. Civil and human rights were no longer popular causes in this country. The *Bakke* decision struck down the use of quotas or reserved slots for specific groups of applicants, and began the slow erosion of hard-fought gains of the 1960's.

The days of Lyndon Baines Johnson, the great education benefactor, are over. Today, national issues are unemployment, inflation, the energy crisis and defense budget. The country has tired of "minorities" that now include not only ethnics, but women, elderly, handicapped and gays.

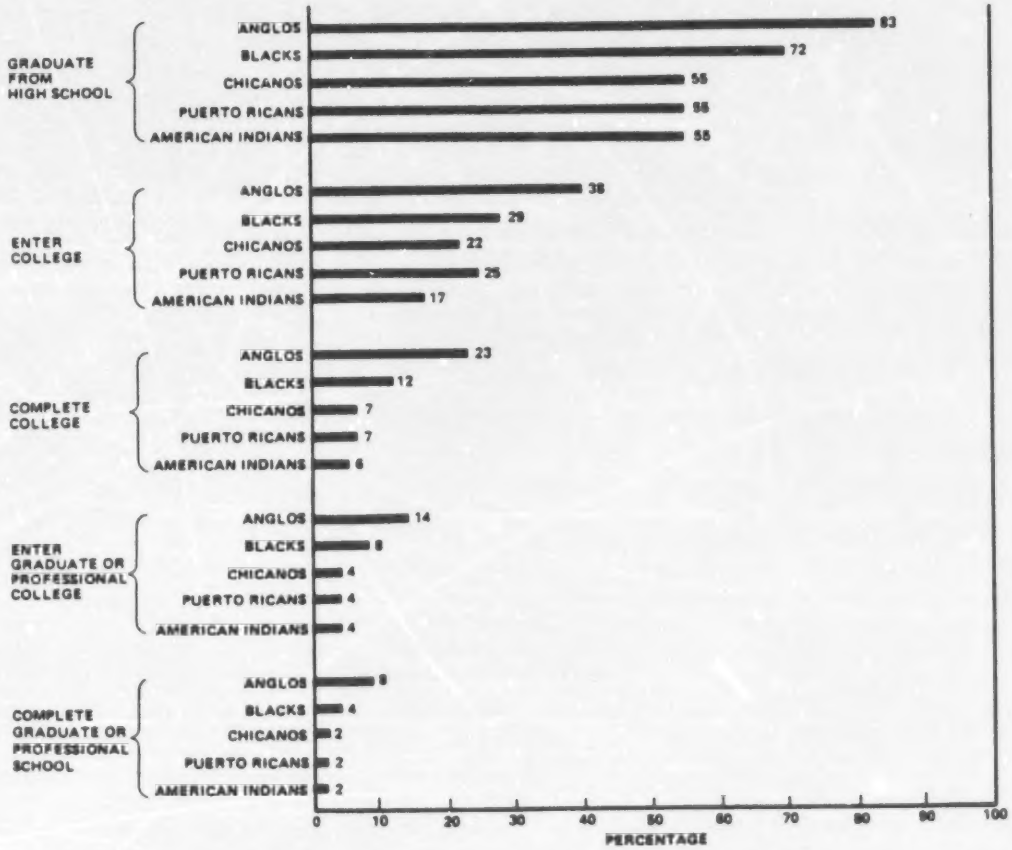
In 1982, a study by the Commission on the Higher Education of Minorities found the educational pipeline to have a 45 percent leak of Chicanos and Puerto Ricans never completing high school.

A 45 percent attrition rate for Indo-Hispanics, youngest, poorest, least politically represented and fastest growing third-world population in this country, is alarming.

Our educational system cannot meet future demands in our new technological society. That the system loses nearly half of all Indo-Hispanics is proof the system is inadequate.

The moral and national consequences

THE EDUCATIONAL PIPELINE IN THIS COUNTRY



SOURCE: Alexander Astin, *Minorities in American Higher Education*, Jossey Bass, 1982 (San Francisco, CA)

of such a phenomenal attrition rate are manifold.

BROAD CONSEQUENCES

Leaving school prematurely accounted for a loss of $47 billion in federal revenues and $24 billion to state and local governments in 1969. Today, those figures have more than doubled.

In 1969, failure of males age 25–34 to graduate from high school, cost them $237 billion in income over their lifetime and $71 billion in foregone government revenues. These figures are from a report by Dr. Levin entitled *The Effects of Dropping Out*, for the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Educational Opportunity (1972).

The economic burdens on society are great when so many students leave the educational pipeline prematurely. Increased taxes are necessary to support welfare programs, fight crime and maintain special programs. Premature school-leaving cost this country an estimated $6 billion in welfare in 1969 and another $6 billion in crime response. Again, today those figures are easily double.

Dr. Levin concludes it is likely youths who leave school early will never participate in the decision-making process of government, enjoy good health or progress up the socio-economic ladder in relation to their previous generation.

The investment to prevent such high attrition would be substantially less than the loss to the nation, state and community.

PERPETUATION OF THE STATUS QUO

So there must be some positive effects from students that "drop-out." There are social critics who view this country's tolerance of exceedingly high attrition rates among certain ethnic groups as a manifestation of a social strategy designed to keep minorities out of the political decision-making role.

Dr. Thomas Carter, Sacramento, echoes the same thought in his early study on southwest Mexican-American education. "The fact that the school fails to Americanize or raise the group status of so many Mexican-Americans is evidence of its success . . . School practices evolved that functioned to perpetuate the social and economic system by unconsciously encouraging the minority students to fail academically, dropout early, and enter society at the low status traditional for Mexican-Americans . . ."

A popular myth: In ten to twenty years there will be a glut of unemployed Indo-Hispanics in this country due to the demands of a highly technological society.

According to Dr. Harold Hudgkinson, senior fellow and former director of the Institute of Educational Leadership, the largest number of new jobs in 1990 will be for janitors, followed by a need for nurses, orderlies, sales clerks, cashiers, waiters, waitresses, office clerks, restaurant workers, truck drivers and other low skill blue and pink collor jobs.

Who will fill these jobs? Indo-Hispanics and other third world people will be available. At the same time, much low-skill assembly jobs are leaving this country for cheaper labor rates in other third world countries.

Consciously or unconsciously, there is a malevolent social strategy in this country that continues to keep Indo-Hispanics away from the "American Dream."

SOURCE: Original art work for this article by reporter Jose Antonio Burciaga.

45 percent of Latinos don't

Results from a 1980 Chicago survey reflect the situation across the country: two-thirds of Latinos never receive a high school diploma and only 51.6 percent complete eighth grade.

Today, Indo-Hispanics have taken the dubious distinction away from Native American Indians for the highest high school attrition rate in the country.

Historically, public educators in the U.S. have been defensive and blame low achieving students or their culture for their deficiencies. Students are labeled "'D' students" – deficient, deprived and different. Rarely does the educational system confess to its profound deficiencies.

Although the home and community is partially responsible, the educational system has not taken responsibility in preventing educational miscarriages.

Dolores Chavez is an experienced counselor at Silver Creek High School in San Jose. She has worked at the federal, state, district and high school levels. Her dedication extends beyond the school to other community organizations such as the G.I. Forum Educational Fund, CASA (Chicano Association of School Administrators) and the Eastside Association of Latino Educators.

VARIOUS FACTORS

Dolores Chavez's perceptions of the high attrition rate at the high school level in San Jose are typical and shared by other counselors across the country:

- Assertiveness is not a Latino cultural trait. Even the "bato loco" (street wise dude) has a very traditional way of thinking.
- Latino mothers always know what is wrong with their children. Their kids never need to ask nor are they encouraged to ask due to cultural or poverty reasons. This extends to the classroom when children hesitate to ask questions after a lecture, explanation or homework assignment.
- A deep sense of family responsibility among Indo-Hispanics causes the oldest child to sacrifice his education in order to help the family.
- In Indian and Hispanic cultures, children are consciously taught to respect and obey their elders and not to question them. The bowed head of an Indo-Hispanic child when facing an adult is a sign of respect and obedience. The Anglo culture prefers eye to eye contact. The teacher receives the bowed head and interprets it as a sign of guilt or suspicion. The polite manners of a Latino are many times interpreted as timidity.
- Latino parents *do* value education but do not question school authorities. They take the school system to be the gospel truth. They assume schools to be perfect and to know best about their children's education.
- There is no efficient Indo-Hispanic parents' network. The traditional parent and teacher associations have never attracted many Spanish speaking parents. Black parents have a network through the church. Many Latino parents are further handicapped from a network due to lack of a telephone or constant disconnections due to unpaid bills.
- There is also a transportation problem for Indo-Hispanic parents and students. This was very evident with the recent rains and floods throughout California.
- There is no "catch-up" or "second chance" programs for the student who decides to return to school after leaving. Most will likely be told they are too far behind and cannot possibly catch up unless they repeat the course or year.

SOCIO-ECONOMICS PLAY A ROLE

Poverty seems to be an underlying cause for many school problems. Another San Jose counselor cites the importance clothes and fashions have among high school students as a cause of attrition. "Let alone the importance, many times the kids don't evey have the proper footwear. Shoes that are torn or without heels are hard to replace. Kids don't want to go to school feeling inferior."

Dr. Angela García, who heads the Evaluation Research Department, Santa Clara County Office of Education, has dealt with attrition of Chicano students not only as an educational researcher but as a teacher.

"It is a complex issue," explains Dr. García. "There are many socio-economic and cultural factors why kids leave school. Sometimes they have no decent clothes or shoes and so they feel shame. There is very little incentive to go to school when their basic needs are not being met. They have difficulty in defining education as relevant."

Dr. García notes how Mexican-American students have strong family support from parents, brothers, sisters, uncles an

complete school

and grandparents. This is a personal type of home support. At home they are taught to respect, obey, listen and be quiet.

The Anglo-dominated school system, on the other hand, teaches kids to be aggressive achievers, independent and assertive. "So the Chicano student gets a mixed message," explains García. "Some kids are less able than others to cope with such cultural conflicts."

Dr. García also notes subtle racism affects Indo-Hispanic students. "Covert racism is just as effective as overt racism. Subtle communication is given to the student that they are of less importance than the white student."

BENIGN NEGLECT

In an article entitled "Institutional Racism in Urban Schools" appearing in the November 1975 issue of *The Black Scholar*, authors, Massey, Scott and Dornbusch, wrote of their study in one San Francisco school district. Their findings are the same as Dr. García's:

> In the past, many teachers expressed overt hostility toward minority students in their classrooms . . . teachers are now expressing warmth toward black students, but are not accompanying their friendliness with challenging academic standards.

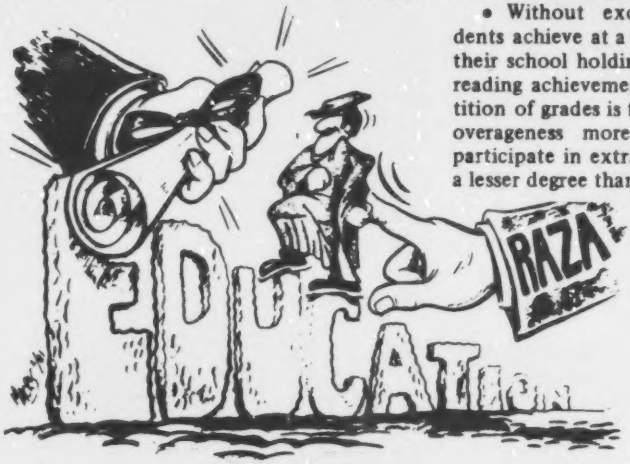
This lack of challenge in a distorted evaluation system is just as debilitating as the old blatant hostility.

There is no lack of diverse role models. The problem is with the role models available to Indo-Hispanic children. Youths relate and look up to their parents even if they are low achievers. Indo-Hispanic students don't relate to their teachers.

It is not enough to consider the historical racism within the educational system; we must also consider that of wider society. Indo-Hispanic parents and children reflect their social conditions.

In 1971, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in Washington, D.C., undertook the most comprehensive Mexican-American Education Study to date.

"Some of its major findings then do not differ much from the reality of today," reports Cecilia Preciado Burciaga who worked on that study as a classroom observer and analyst. She also served on the Commission that found the 45 percent attrition rate and today she is assistant provost at Stanford University.



The U.S. Civil Rights Commission findings are still relevant 12 years later:

- Mexican-Americans are severely isolated by school district and by schools within individual districts.
- Mexican-Americans are underrepresented on school and district professional staffs as teachers, principals and superintendents and on boards of education.
- Mexican-Americans, blacks and American Indians do not obtain the benefits of public education at a rate equal to that of their Anglo classmates.
- Without exception, minority students achieve at a lower rate than Anglos; their school holding power is lower; their reading achievement is poorer; their repetition of grades is far more frequent; their overageness more prevalent; and they participate in extra curricular activities to a lesser degree than Anglo students.

National, local

Federal funds for studies on Hispanic education are about as dry as a water hole in the Mojave Desert.

With this in mind, a small group of Indo-Hispanic eduation experts in Washington, D.C., today works feverishly on their main concern – "the inability of school districts around the country to educate Hispanic children and the failure of federal education equity legislation."

NATIONAL COALITION

They constitute the Hispanic Higher Education Coalition with representatives from major Latino and non-Latino organizations such as LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, National Education Association, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, and the Institute of Educational Leadership.

Their efforts focus on the phenomenal number of Latino youth not completing high school.

Tomás Saucedo, a research specialist with NEA has lived and worked in the nation's capital for the past 12 years and has witnessed the drastic federal cuts in education and the deterioration of U.S. Hispanic education.

"Our resources are very limited. . . . We're barely hanging on," he explains, scratching the air as if hanging from a precipice.

Rafael Magallán, executive director of the coalition, is surrounded in his office by books, studies, printouts and reports on every conceivable aspect of Latinos in education.

LACK OF CURRENT STUDIES

Rafael quotes statistics, studies and easily finds the exact report or printout from the hundreds in his office. But for the most part Rafael Magallán finds much of this information on Hispanics in education either to be out of date or not sufficiently specific to Hispanics.

"The issue of attrition has not been given much public attention since the early seventies when the last great study on attrition was done . . . and even then no particular attention was paid to ethnicity," explains Magallán.

"We can see there has been an erosion, more gross numbers as well as higher percentages of non-completions. It's suicidal for our communities – those of us that are concerned with seeing our people move forward socially and economically," he adds.

The coalition is attempting to raise the issue and package it so as to generate some positive public response.

RESOURCE MANUAL

One project under consideration is that of a handbook on the Hispanic dropout. Justo Robles, a professional associate with NEA, has proposed the structure of the handbook to carry practical subjects such as a bibliography, a research agenda, financial aid sources, a profile of needs and priorities, successful retention programs, case studies of Hispanic college students (successful retainees), counseling, teacher preparation, school administrator training, recognizing warning signals and alternatives.

Such a handbook could provide the

programs target "drop-outs"

necessary guidance, network and advocacy.

According to Saucedo and Magallán, the 45 percent attrition rate is a rough estimate. Better data is not available. There needs to be a clear distinction between dropouts, pushouts and transfers.

Some critics contend 45 percent is an exaggeration, arguing many Hispanics transfer and many sign up for military duty. This is a fallacy and a myth: the numbers of transfers do not total up as graduates and today the military requires a high school diploma.

LOCAL PROGRAMS

Dolores Chavez, a San Jose high school counselor, puts more faith in school and community programs than in federal programs, which require "strict guidelines, report writing, evaluations and the politics of the whole thing."

Chavez says high school students are very susceptible to peer pressure and among San Jose high school gangs, leaders could make the difference.

"We need more leadership training. Leadership has to be taught."

Most Indo-Hispanic students do not volunteer for extracurricular activities. Chavez has been more successful in recruiting students than asking for volunteers.

Chavez says Indo-Hispanic students also need constant reinforcement because of cultural conflicts. "More awards should be given to help reinforce the positives," she suggests.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Studies show certain methods do work to reinforce Latino students. One of them is bilingual education because it reinforces in Spanish what students learn in English.

Contrary to the popular myth, bilingual education does not utilize the child's native tongue 100 percent of the time. Sixty-four percent of all bilingual teachers report using English as a language of instruction at least 75 percent of the time.

In a report prepared by Lori Orum, education analyst for the National Council of La Raza, bilingual education myths are dispelled with hard facts and statistics.

Despite the acknowledged success of bilingual education by many educational experts, the chances of local acceptance, not to mention funding, are quite slim. It is still a controversial subject.

More innovative changes are needed to cope with the hemorrage of Indo-Hispanics from the educational pipeline.

While Tomás Saucedo agrees, he is also convinced that nothing changes radically in U.S. education. "Just to change from one textbook to another is sometimes a major undertaking," says Saucedo.

The ball comes back to the community. "That's where the real *nata* (cream) is," explained Tomás.

PROGRAM SHOWS PROMISE

A successful model of an innovative process to educate and graduate high-risk "dropout" students was developed in Washington, D.C. in January of 1980. The "Multicultural Career Intern Program" uses rent-free space in District of Columbia public schools. Its objectives are:

1. Increase high school completion.
2. Improve basic academic skills.
3. Encourage career planning and knowledge of occupations.
4. Facilitate transition from school to work.
5. Promote proficiency of English language and adaptation to North American society.
6. Place participants in meaingful employment and/or post-secondary educational experiences concurrently or upon graduation.

This alternative high school is designed to

break the cycle of lack of education, unemployment and poverty. Its 350 students come from 30 countries. The majority are Indo-Hispanics, most from El Salvador.

The program's objectives are not only met but exceeded. Fifty-six percent of participants continue on to college.

To reach their goals, students are given an assessment of native skills, receive intensive English as a Second Language training, have flexible hours so they can work, are offered part time jobs and receive career guidance.

According to María Tukeva, program director, its number one success factor is the nature of the staff and interest in the student.

Hector Montenegro of San Jose is one of those dedicated, bilingual teachers. Montenegro says such a program would definitely work in San Jose.

LOCAL PROGRAM UNDERWAY

There are community programs that can have a vital effect on the student and school. Such a community organization was begun by Bill Ramos in San Jose. The youth organization was founded in 1969 under the auspices of the local YMCA but grew to such a proportion that they had to separate.

From the beginning, eight and nine-year olds had a decision in its founding. They named it The Mosquito Club.

The Club was established to combat violence but has had an effect on youths leaving school prematurely. The organization is run by mostly volunteers from the community, including peer counselor and parents, some who grew up in the Mosquito Club.

To this day, Bill Ramos continues as the director and explains the points they address:

- Sensitive to the youth's school needs.
- Identification of troublemakers.
- Independent study programs.
- Making youngsters a valuable resource in the community.
- Interrelating with parents, police, business, educators, parks and recreation, and home owners.
- Teach youth the curriculum of life.
- Give youth a sense of importance, dignity and self worth.
- Teach the oldest in a family the skills necessary to keep the family together.
- Build trust between the community and the child.

Ramos says he simply addresses the pr problems he sees. "Kids have no input into the school system," he explains, "no feeling of ownership and are shuffled around. They have no sense of community or pride. Ninety to ninety-five percent of the kids are from one-parent families. In this area, Silicon Valley displaced many farm worker parents into welfare roles. A few years ago, Silicon Valley was nothing but agricultural fields."

Despite many setbacks and an uncertain future, Indo-Hispanic educators and community workers have begun the task themselves, knowing the greatest educational system in the world failed close to half of them.

Jamake Highwater, Native American philosopher, writes of this ethnocentric world we live in.

"None of us can afford to be a chosen people," argues Highwater. "The melting pot theory is but a self serving fallacy. The savages have not only survived but multiplied and found values and viewpoints that have been largely ignored by the dominant culture."

Highwater gives us an insight into one of the main problems between Indo-Hispanics and an Anglo educational system in the introduction to *The Primal Mind*. "The greatest distance between people is not space but culture."

Section Four

Reading in Urban Schools

Dallas Times Herald

Reading: Finding A Better Way

A Four-Part Series *By Dale Rice*

Part 1: Formula

Phonics method gets results — but not acceptance

In a poor black area of northwest Houston, third grade pupils attending their neighborhood public school are reading on the fourth grade level. Some are already reading as well as fifth graders.

Although the children come from social and economic backgrounds that most educators say would condemn them to being below-average pupils, the poor black youngsters are almost a full year ahead of the average Dallas public school third grader in reading.

Moreover, they are reading better than average third graders from middle and upper-middle class families living in the predominantly white North Dallas neighborhoods that feed schools like Walnut Hill and Cabell Elementary near Valley View Lane and Webb Chapel Road.

The black Houston youngsters attend Wesley Elementary School in one of the city's poorest neighborhoods. Wesley was one of 18 predominantly black or Hispanic elementary schools that were the subject of a six-week study by the Dallas Times Herald.

Like pupils at the other 17 schools, the average Wesley third grader reads at or above the national average — as measured by standardized tests — while Dallas third graders score below the national average.

On a standardized test given nationwide, Wesley third graders scored an average of 4.3 — meaning that they were reading at the same level as the average fourth grader three months into the school year. Dallas third graders, in contrast, averaged 3.4 while the national average is 3.7.

The study initially identified 204 elementary schools in the poorest neighborhoods in Texas' largest cities. Of those schools, only 25 had third grade students reading at or above the national average, including one in Dallas — Phyllis Wheatley Elementary.

The third grade was the benchmark for the Times Herald study of 18 of the 25 schools, because that is the first grade at which standardized achievement tests measure whether children understand what they read.

If the 18 schools could teach even the most disadvantaged third graders how to read better than the national average, perhaps they had found a better way to teach reading. After all, they had defied what the educational community has accepted as conventional wisdom for the last two decades: that children from deprived backgrounds can't learn as well

About the Author

DALE RICE. Public school students in Dallas and many other large urban school systems are below-average readers, and that impairs their ability to learn other subjects. In an attempt to learn why some schools succeed where others fail, Rice spent six weeks studying classrooms in Texas' poorest city neighborhoods. His main findings: the schools that do the best job, and accomplish it with children from impoverished homes, emphasize phonics, discipline and sound teaching methods. Importantly, every teacher in the study had high expectations of students. Rice, who has been education reporter for the *Times Herald* for four years, is an experienced writer in the field. He began his career in Syracuse, N.Y., where he covered education for five years before moving to Dallas.

as youngsters from middle- and upper-class families.

"It is possible" to teach poor children, to enable them to learn, says Wesley Principal Thaddeus Lott. "We've shown it; we've proven it over and over again."

How?

By using a teaching method that Dallas tried, but then rejected, despite dramatic results from a two-year experiment at two South Dallas elementary schools, Charles Rice and H. S. Thompson.

That same teaching method, or a similar phonics-based method, was the common denominator found in every case by a Times Herald reporter who visited the 18 schools. And this finding was also in conflict with what has become conventional wisdom among American educators: that the "look-say" method of reading, taught to generations of Americans with the famous Dick and Jane readers, is somehow superior to the phonic system favored by Europeans.

Phonics, which helped the poor minority children surpass the average Dallas student, is based on teaching youngsters the sounds that letters and groups of letters make, and how various letters can be combined to make words. It is a system that gives children the building blocks of words.

el el el el
e e e e
va va va va
tor tor tor tor
el-e-va-tor
elevator

By contrast, the "look-say" method, which was embraced by the American educational establishment in the early 1930s, relies on teaching children to recognize whole words.

Look, Jane, look. See Spot run. See Dick run.

American educators have been debating the relative merits of phonics versus "look-say" ever since 1955, when Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read* was a national best seller for 30 weeks. Flesch is an unabashed proponent of phonics, and claims that study after study for 72 years has concluded that phonics is superior to look-say for teaching reading.

But the debate remains lopsided.

Professor Jeanne Chall, who has devoted more than 30 years to the subject of reading methods, says that one three-year study she conducted for the Carne-

— Staff photo by Paul Iverson

Evelyn Parker studies a lesson in her third-grade class at Phyliis Wheatley Elementary School

gie Corporation found that most educators still cling to the "look-say" teaching method. "Most schoolchildren in the United States are taught to read by (look-say)" even though "the research from 1912 to 1965 indicates that (phonics) produces better results. . ."

"Phonics in the primary grades is what I have found over and over again to be very important," says professor Chall. "That's why I put it as the first stage of learning to read."

And if poor minority children are to have any chance in life, reading is the essential first step, according to Waynel Sexton, a third grade teacher at Douglas Elementary School in a decaying neighborhood near downtown Houston.

"Reading is like breathing in our society today," she says, adding that "in a poor area like this (in Houston), for children to have any success in life, they need to be able to read."

John Henry Martin, a former school superintendent who developed a special phonics reading program that IBM is currently testing with 10,000 pupils nationwide, says that reading is the biggest hurdle on the road to learning in English.

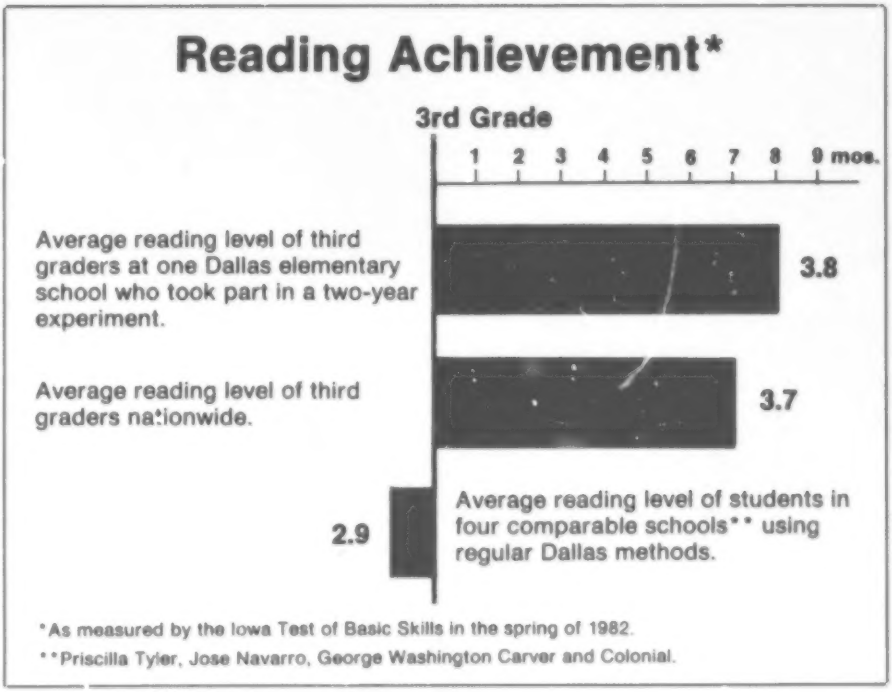
"The most difficult task in the English-speaking world is learning to read," says Martin, who argues that phonics will make that hurdle less formidable for students. "Everything else is relatively easy."

Moreover, Martin says that look-say severely retards the progress most pupils could make in reading and writing. He notes that the typical first grade reader uses a vocabulary of only 350 words, when tests have shown that children entering the first grade already have a vocabulary of 2,500 to 4,500 words.

With look-say, says Martin, "we feed young schoolchildren pablumized pap, simple sentences and limited vocabulary."

Phonics was an important ingredient of American public education at the turn of the century. However, by the early 1900s educators had begun to turn away from teaching methods that centered around the letter sounds toward the concept of teaching whole words. Only after children had learned many basic words were the letter sounds introduced.

Since the appearance of *Why Johnny Can't Read*, some phonics instruction has been incorporated into most basic reading textbooks, according to professor Chall. However, Flesch — in his recent book *Why Johnny Still Can't Read* — maintains that most publishers and educators still continue to emphasize the teaching of reading by whole words as


Reading Achievement*
3rd Grade
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 mos.
Average reading level of third graders at one Dallas elementary school who took part in a two-year experiment.
3.8
Average reading level of third graders nationwide.
3.7
2.9
Average reading level of students in four comparable schools** using regular Dallas methods.
*As measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in the spring of 1982.
**Priscilla Tyler, Jose Navarro, George Washington Carver and Colonial.

— Staff charts

opposed to phonics.

Yet, at Houston's Wesley Elementary School, where third graders are reading as well as average fourth graders, the principal says that the key to success is unquestionably phonics.

"I'm from the school of phonics; I'm a phonics man," Lott says, explaining that he believes students must learn to build and break down words by individual sounds if they are going to be good readers.

Regardless of the basic reading book used by the school system, or how much it stresses phonics, in all of the 18 successful schools studied by the Times Herald teachers drilled pupils heavily in phonics.

And phonics makes a big difference, teachers say.

"I taught six years in another state," says Wesley teacher Bonnie Klutts. "Coming here and having second-graders reading better than the fourth-graders I taught previously was something special."

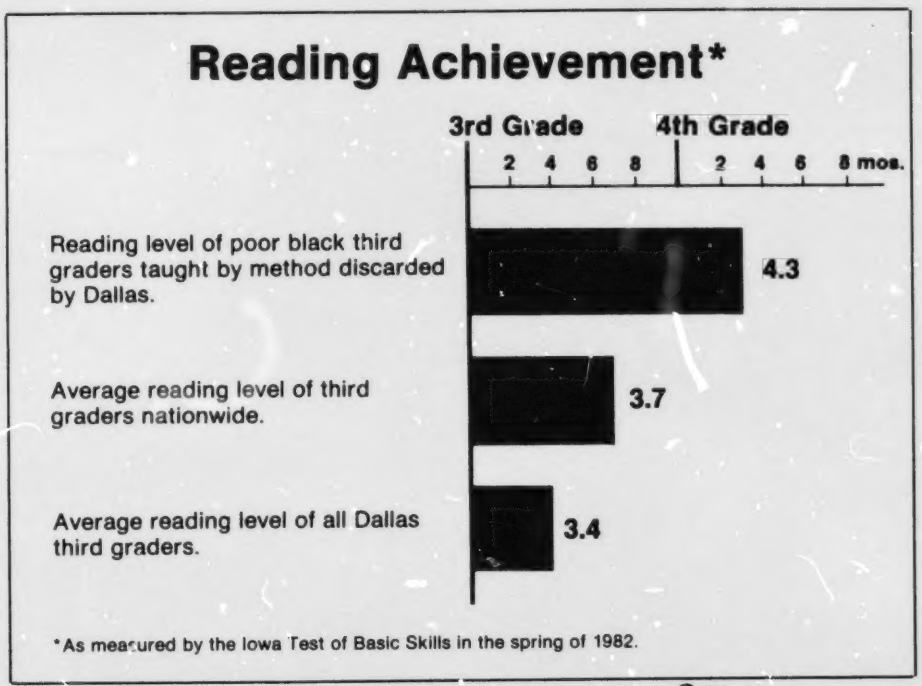
The reading program used at Wesley Elementary is called Distar, and it also produced significant results in two elementary schools in Dallas where it was tested between 1980 and 1982, according to Dallas school researchers.

Third grade pupils at Charles Rice and H. S. Thompson Elementary Schools, located in poor black neighborhoods in South Dallas, outperformed pupils at comparable schools in reading.

Thompson third-graders who had been in the program two years were reading at the early third grade level, which is about the average for the district as a whole. Students at four comparison schools were reading at a high second grade level, almost a year behind the Thompson students.

Although proven successful, the phonics-based program was dumped by schools officials last year after School Board Vice President Kathlyn Gilliam and several teachers campaigned against it. "I personally didn't like the approach. It was too regimented, kids doing things in a lock-step manner. I didn't like the program at all, and some of the teachers didn't like it," Mrs. Gilliam explains.

Another common denominator found at all of the successful schools was a heavy emphasis on "choral reading" — a teaching technique generally deserted generations ago. The teachers had their pupils read aloud and answer questions together as a group. And repetition was a large part of the teaching process, too. Whenever children hesitated or answered incorrectly, they were made to


Reading Achievement*
3rd Grade
4th Grade
2 4 6 8
2 4 6 8 mos.
Reading level of poor black third graders taught by method discarded by Dallas.
4.3
Average reading level of third graders nationwide.
3.7
Average reading level of all Dallas third graders.
3.4
*As measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in the spring of 1982.

repeat the response again and again.

Eliamaye McCall, a teacher at Sanderson Elementary School in Houston, relies on the use of repetition to make sure her pupils learn to pronounce words correctly and understand their reading lessons. Repetition also forms a pattern of consistency that is beneficial for the children, she says.

"We *are* consistent," Mrs. McCall says. "It's something you have to instill from the beginning of the term."

In the successful schools, if a pupil hesitates in answering a question, or gives the wrong answer, the teacher requires the child to repeat the words or sentences again and again until the correct response comes quickly and fluently.

"Repetition is one thing that makes a difference," says Sanderson Principal Iris E. Ashley.

Teachers also spend a large amount of class time conducting choral responses, in all the pupils in the class answer questions together and do oral exercizes as a group.

"I want everybody following," says Laticia Gonzales, a third grade teacher at David Barkley Elementary School in San Antonio.

"Let's all read the sentences now," Barkley third grade teacher Louise Yena constantly directs her pupils.

Ms. Gonzales and Ms. Yena, along with a majority of the teachers observed in the study, spend more time with pupils repeating words and other reading exercises out loud together than teachers in other schools where pupils are not reading on grade level.

Choral reading, according to several educators, is the method used in China to teach pupils to read. It was a favored teaching method used years ago in the United States, reading experts say, but it is now considered old-fashioned and inappropriate by most educators. However, there is research to indicate that choral responses are good for young children.

The Times Herald study of successful minority schools also found that:

- ✓ teachers constantly praised their pupils, building their confidence and reinforcing their achievements.
- ✓ classrooms were highly structured, with seating usually in traditional rows.
- ✓ strict discipline was maintained in all of the classrooms,
- ✓ teachers spent almost no time at all at their desks, and were constantly up and moving among the children. In many of the classrooms the teacher's desk was at the back of the room.
- ✓ against conventional wisdom in the educational community, there was little or no pupil work displayed on the walls of those successful third-grade classrooms.

The Times Herald study also raised questions about two nearly universal policies in both the state's and the nation's public school systems:

Does bilingual education — by making allowances for a child's language handicap — actually hold back children who understand little or no English?

Do the public schools begin teaching children to read at a young enough age?

But after phonics, the second most important factor in successful reading programs appeared to be the standards that were set.

Teachers' dislike halted successful Dallas program

In 1979, Dallas Independent School District officials decided it was time to take drastic measures to reverse a decade of declining achievement test scores.

While the school board — with considerable public fanfare — approved a four-year program to end social promotion, it routinely agreed to spend some of the district's federal aid on a special reading program in two schools.

Although that reading program, used successfully by several Houston schools where disadvantaged children now are reading at or above the national average, produced similar results, Dallas school officials abandoned it in 1982 after only two years of trial.

At that time, third-graders in one of the schools were reading just above the national average and a year above their peers in similar Dallas schools. Those same students in 1980 had been doing as poorly as youngsters at comparable Dallas schools, reading in the bottom fifth of students nationwide.

At the conclusion of the two-year experiment, third-grade students at H.S. Thompson and Charles Rice elementary schools, located in poor black neighborhoods in South Dallas, were reading at a significantly higher level than students at the schools used for comparison.

Thompson third-graders who spent two years learning to read in the special program called Distar were reading at a high third-grade level, just above the national average. Third-graders at Rice who had been in the program two years were reading at the early third-grade level, about the same level as the district average.

Students at four comparison schools — Priscilla Tyler, Jose Navarro, George Washington Carver and Colonial — were reading at a high second-grade level.

Although proved successful, the phonics-based program was dumped by school officials after school board Vice President Kathlyn Gilliam and several teachers campaigned against it.

"Distar lost here politically," said one school official, who asked that he not be quoted by name.

The basis of the Distar reading program is phonics — the sounds of letters and how to use them to build and break down words. Teachers follow a script for the teaching of reading that contains a significant amount of repetition of words and exercises, as well as substantial praise for students.

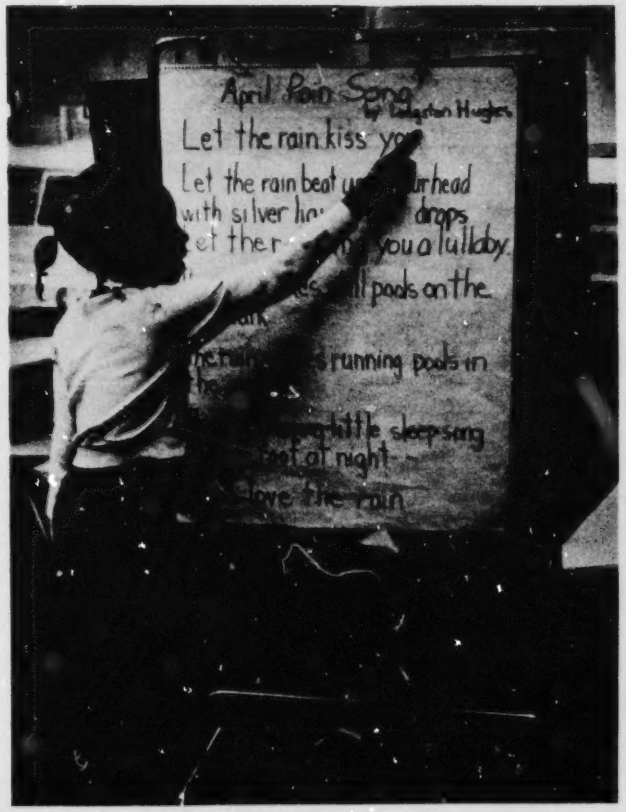
In a study conducted for the federal government, Distar was the only reading series tested that produced significant results with disadvantaged children.

Still, Distar was highly unpopular with 20 percent of the teahcers who had used it, according to a DISD attitude survey, largely because it forced teachers to keep track on paper of each student's progress through the reading program.

The majority praised the reading program, even though they agreed they were forced to work harder with Distar than with other reading series.

"It's hard on the teacher. It's taxing," says Waynel Sexton, a second-grade teacher at Douglas Elementary School in Houston. "But the benefits so far outweigh the other."

In Dallas, Mrs. Gilliam, who represents the South Dallas area where Thompson and Rice elementary schools are located, objected to the Distar program because "it was too regimented; kids doing things in a lock-step manner."



— Staff photo by Paul Iverson

Young Dallas student leads class in reading a poem together

"I personally didn't like the approach," she said. "I didn't like the program at all, and some of the teachers didn't like it. I couldn't find anybody gung-ho about it, except the people who set it up.

Part 2: Great expectations

Demanding standards, discipline help students learn

The scene is a third-grade classroom at Houston's Looscan Elementary School, where children from a poor, predominantly Hispanic neighborhood north of downtown are learning to read.

Brenda Bledsoe hustles about, a well-organized teacher working directly from her teacher's guide. Only seconds lapse between exercises in the high-activity classroom as she drills her pupils in the sounds that letters make.

"You're great," she tells them frequently. "That's good, very good."

She makes the pupils repeat words if they hesitate or answer incorrectly. Much of the time, they say the words aloud together. They are well-disciplined, seated in neat, traditional rows. While Ms. Bledsoe works with one reading group, the others work independently and quietly.

The teacher is clearly the boss, and her pupils know it.

They also know how to read, with reading scores on standardized achievement tests a full year ahead of the national average for their grade.

Ask Ms. Bledsoe why her pupils are learning so well, and she will echo the others in a scattered group of teachers found by a Dallas Times Herald study to be successfully teaching some of the state's poorest urban children to read:

Ms. Bledsoe will say she *expects* the children to learn.

"I set the same expectations here as in Spring Branch (one of Houston's wealthiest suburban school districts)," Ms. Bledsoe says. "I see children as children, regardless of economic status. If I don't challenge them, they won't learn anything."

Looscan Principal Herminia M. Uresti agrees. Expectations, she says, are a crucial factor in teaching disadvantaged children to read.

"We are very demanding. We have high standards," she says. "I don't believe that because of a handicapped background, they can't learn."

In more than 40 third-grade classrooms across Texas, teachers and principals agree with that philosophy. As a result, at 18 poor, predominantly minority urban schools, the third-graders in those classrooms are reading at or above the national average.

Expectations are not everything: In all those classrooms, teachers stress phonics (the recognition of words through the sounds of their letters) in teaching reading to youngsters. And they have implemented strikingly similar teaching methods that are efficient, effective and, sometimes, against the grain developed by the American public education establishment over the last two decades.

The results are classrooms such as Brenda Bledsoe's at Looscan — prototypes for success in teaching children to read, according to the Times Herald's survey of 204 schools in the poorest neighborhoods in the urban districts of Texas.

Expectations are certainly the guiding factor: Even the methods adopted by teachers and principals in the 18 successful schools reflect a refusal to accept the disadvantages of economic and cultural deprivation as reasons for not learning. They are teaching methods, with a few new twists, that were around for generations before they fell into disfavor during the education reform efforts of the last 20 years.

Those changes, fueled by the work of sociologist James Coleman, were an attempt to find new ways to teach disadvantaged children. Coleman's report for the federal government, which charted the course of education for a generation, showed that learning is linked to a pupil's family background.

The home, Coleman said, is a major influence on education. Because of

that, poor children do not achieve as well as middle-class children.

"I preached that," says Supt. Linus Wright of the Dallas Independent School District, who acknowledges that Coleman's report has been used as a rationale for the failure of public schools. "But I've repented my sins. I know now that all children can learn."

Still, Dallas, the eighth largest urban school system in the nation, is a prime example of what happened to education in U. S. cities during the 1960s and 1970s.

As the legions of urban poor grew over that time, so did the search for alternatives to teach those "hard-to-educate" pupils. A parade of new teaching methods was marched through the public schools, including individualized instruction and "open classrooms."

But while educators searched for and experimented with new teaching methods that might work with poor pupils, the test scores and achievement levels of all pupils took a 20-year slide.

"What we're dealing with," says Harold Hodgkinson, a leading education researcher and former head of the National Institute of Education, "is a slippage caused by white, upper-middle-class teachers trying some very effete styles.

"What happened was a slopover of liberal, radical educators applying their trip to somebody else. Those people did us a disservice by inflicting their views on kids."

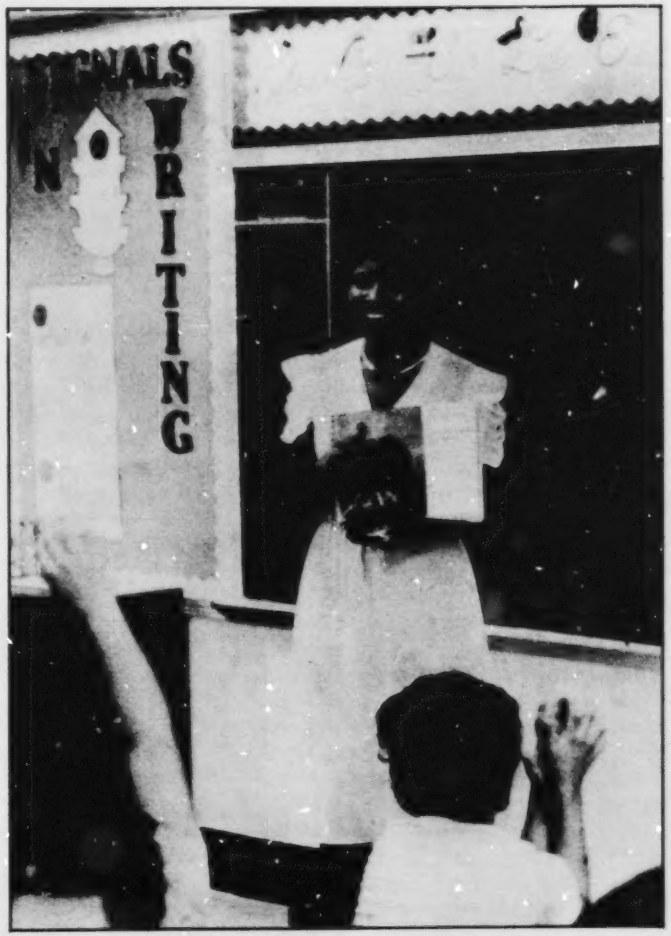
The resulting deterioration in achievement among urban school pupils, and the implied decline in the quality of education, helped drive middle-class families out of the public schools. By 1980, the nation's largest school systems, including Dallas, were filled with mostly poor and minority pupils, the very pupils that schools have had little success in educating.

Among the 204 elementary schools serving the poorest neighborhoods in the seven largest urban systems in Texas, only 25 are managing to teach third-graders to read at national-average levels.

In the DISD last year, in fact, third-graders at only one of the 46 poorest elementary schools reached the national average. In some Dallas schools, the average third-grader is reading only as well as beginning second-graders nationwide.

A Times Herald reporter visited more than 40 classrooms in 18 of those 25 schools in poor neighborhoods where third-graders are learning to read and understand what they have read at a national average or better. In those classrooms, like Ms. Bledsoe's at Looscan, teachers were using methods that have been around for years but have generally been replaced by newer styles:

Teachers set high standards; teachers constantly praised their pupils; classrooms were highly structured; discipline was important; pupils were drilled heavily in phonics; and teachers had pupils repeat words or exercises when they hesitated or failed to



— UPI photo

Brenda Bledsoe puts her pupils through their demanding, high-activity paces in the third-grade class at Looscan Elementary School in Houston, located in a poor, predominantly Hispanic neighborhood.

answer questions correctly.

Some factors identified in the study are even more rare in the mainstream of public classrooms:

Teachers made substantial use of group responses to questions and exercises; teachers spent almost no time at their desks; teachers used a method of holding direct eye contact with individual pupils while asking and waiting for them to answer questions; and there was little or no pupil work displayed on the walls of those successful classrooms.

•

Teachers and principals in the poor and mostly minority urban schools that are successfully teaching children to read in Texas say that overcoming the children's image of themselves is their toughest problem. They combat that problem with high standards.

"You have to set high expectations for the children and believe in them," says Lydia Cordova, principal of Scroggins Elementary School in Houston. "You can't make excuses and say that because these children come from this (poor) background, they don't have potential. They do."

To mine that potential, the principals and teachers have independently developed very deliberate approaches with marked similarities. The basic examples:

✔ All of the more than 40 classrooms visited by the Times Herald were visibly structured. Desks were in the traditional rows in all but two or three of the classrooms. The classes were divided into two or three reading groups, and the teachers worked with a group at a time while the others worked independently.

Every teacher observed in the successful schools worked directly from the teacher's guide. They worked hard, following routine and wasting little time as they moved from group to group or exercise to exercise. The teachers were clearly well-organized.

"There has to be structure," says Thaddeus Lott, principal of Wesley Elementary School, one of the highest-scoring of the poorest elementary schools in Houston. At Wesley, the third-graders are reading as well as fourth-graders nationwide.

✔ The structured nature of the classrooms was coupled closely with good discipline:

In all but two of the classrooms, discipline was strict. Pupils were not running around the classroom; they asked permission to get out of their seats. While a teacher worked with one reading group, the other pupils worked quietly and independently.

"We have our children under control," says Freddie J. McGowen, principal of Highland Heights Elementary School in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Northwest Houston. "They're well-disciplined."

✔ While having pupils do reading exercises, most of the teachers moved around the room. Occasionally, a teacher would call a group of pupils together around a large table and sit with them while they read.

None of the teachers taught from behind desks.

Oakland, Calif., Supt. David Bowick maintains that desks often get in the way of good teaching. He says the problem with desks is that too many teachers, consciously or subconscious-

'What we're dealing with is a slippage caused by white, upper-middle-class teachers trying some very effete styles. What happened was a slopover of liberal, radical educators applying their trip to somebody else. Those people did us a disservice by inflicting their views on kids.'

— Harold Hodgkinson, education researcher

ly, use them to establish barriers between themselves and pupils.

That problem is widespread, agrees DISD Supt. Wright. "My observation from walking around and visiting schools (in Dallas)," he says, "is that 90 percent of our teachers were teaching at their desks."

✓ McDade Elementary School teacher Alice Moore is on her feet, moving all of the time she teaches reading. When she asks a child a question, she doesn't stand in the front of the room and wait for him to answer.

Instead, Ms. Moore, like other teachers in the study, looks directly at the youngster and walks in his direction, often standing beside him while he answers. She and the other teachers deliberately establish individual interactions with their pupils.

For 15 or 20 seconds, there is direct, interpersonal contact between a child and an adult — something teachers say happens infrequently in the lives of children in those poorest schools, who often come from single-parent families.

✓ When pupils answer questions correctly in the successful schools, they are praised profusely. Teachers frequently tell them how bright they are or how well they are doing.

"Good thinking," a beaming Pat Westberry repeatedly told her pupils at Elma A. Neal Elementary School in a poor Hispanic neighborhood of north San Antonio. Her praise consistently evoked bright smiles from the youngsters.

"You're like a cheerleader almost, but the results are worth it," says a second-grade teacher at Houston's Douglas Elementary School. "This makes them feel happy and good about themselves."

Even when the youngsters answered incorrectly, most teachers did not tell the pupils they were wrong, but instead asked who had another answer or idea.

Floyd N. Stringfellow, principal of Houston's McDade Elementary — which is 90 percent black and nearly 10 percent Hispanic — encourages his teachers to praise pupils every chance they get. He wants the youngsters to believe, he says, that, "I am somebody."

"Race has nothing to do with learning skills. Just because a student is poor has nothing to do with his ability to learn," Stringfellow says. "Just because we don't have the income, we're not poor in spirit."

✓ Surprisingly, one way that the successful schools did not try to build the confidence of pupils was by placing their outstanding papers on the classroom walls, a common practice supported by a number of studies that have concluded that children's work on the walls is one way to help identify good schools.

Education expert Hodgkinson says, however, that by selecting the outstanding work of a few pupils to display, a teacher may actually be establishing a caste system within the class, singling out some children for praise and silently telling others they are not doing well.

Part 3:

Programs find success by shunning native tongues

English spoken here

Clarita Rivera moved to the last of five new vocabulary words in the story that one of her third-grade reading groups was preparing to read.

"Twilight," she said, pointing to the bottom word on the blackboard. "What's 'twilight?' "

Her pupils at Fannin Elementary School in East Dallas looked puzzled. None responded, as they had with previous words such as "architect" and "passageway."

"*Crepusculo*," Mrs. Rivera said. "That's 'twilight.' "

Mrs. Rivera had resorted to Spanish, the native language of her pupils, to define the vocabulary word. Later, she used Spanish again to make sure the pupils understood the directions to an exercise in their reading lesson.

The goal at Fannin and dozens of other Texas elementary schools with large numbers of children who speak little or no English is to help those children learn the English language. Teachers often use the children's native tongue to make sure they understand.

But that practice contrasts sharply with what is happening in several poor urban schools in Texas that have large numbers of limited-English-speaking kids — and where third graders not only read better than Dallas Hispanic children, but are reading better than Dallas third graders as a whole, and above the national average.

The Times Herald visited more than 40 classrooms in 18 urban Texas schools, where — in defiance of conventional wisdom among educators — children with language handicaps and from disadvantaged backgrounds were reading at a level equal to or better than the national average.

The Times Herald study found that the schools that were the most successful used teaching methods that ran counter to the mainstream in bilingual education of today, and that teachers in those schools made few allowances for the language handicaps of their pupils.

Instead, when they teach English reading, those teachers treat the children as though they are fluent in English. They expect them to understand their reading lessons in English, and avoid using a pupil's native tongue.

The study indicated that making allowances for language handicaps may have ultimately hindered those children in the acquisition of the English language.

That finding is further supported by an experiment being conducted in conjunction with the Texas Education Agency in several predominantly Hispanic elementary schools, including seven in Houston. Pupils at those schools, who receive no instruction in their native language, are also doing well, according to test results.

The Fannin Elementary School pupils are among the thousands of elementary school youngsters in the Dallas Independent School District whose ability to read and write English is limited. Statewide, there are an estimated 500,000 children who have a limited knowledge of English.

Nationwide, there are an estimated 3.6 million school-age children who have a limited ability to speak and read English, according to a study conducted by the National Institute of Education for the U.S. Department of Education. Two-thirds of those youngsters are concentrated in three states: California, New York and Texas.

Those pupils pose a national educational and political dilemma: What is the best way to teach them English, and do the public schools have a responsibility to help pupils maintain their native language?

The issue does not encompass Spanish-speaking children alone. As more and more refugees from Southeast Asia settle in the nation's cities, the problem is growing. And there is no limit to its magnitude if the public schools are going to treat equally all those children who do not speak English.

Schools have been wrestling with how to teach children with limited English-speaking ability since the U. S. Supreme Court ruled in 1974 that schools must make a special educational effort to overcome the language handicaps of those pupils.

Two major methods have emerged: bilingual education and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL). In bilingual education, pupils are taught subjects such as mathematics and reading in their native language while they learn English. In ESL, students are taught in English but are given special language instruction that helps them adapt to English as quickly as possible.

Both methods involve the pupils' native language, if there is a teacher available who can speak it. Many educators believe that a child who must cope with schooling in a language other than his own is facing hurdles he may never surmount.

"It always hurts a child to some extent to teach him in a language other than his own," says William Pulte, a professor of anthropology at Southern Methodist University and a specialist in bilingual education.

"When I look at it from a humane point of view, kids who can't speak English are definitely handicapped," says Dallas school Supt. Linus Wright.

However, pupils at several of the poor schools included in the reading study — schools with large numbers of limited-English-speaking children that are reading on grade level — treat those children as though they fully understand all words and directions in English.

Rudolph Troike, one of the nation's leading experts on bilingual education, says the findings of the Times Herald study are "very interesting."

"It is possible that the teachers, in doing what they were doing, were pushing them (the pupils), and they were responding to the challenge," says Troike, a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and former head of the Center for Applied Linguistics.

Hermnia Uresti agrees. She is principal of Looscan Elementary School in a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood of northwest Houston. Of 18 poor urban schools successfully teaching reading in Texas, Looscan's pupils scored highest on standardized achievement tests — with third graders reading a full year above grade level.

"If you push kids," Ms. Uresti says, "they will meet the challenge."

While a Looscan teacher may use Spanish to explain something at the beginning of the year, by mid-year teachers seldom use any Spanish during the teaching of English reading. Alice Diaz, whose third grade is full of children who receive bilingual education during other parts of the day, treats those children as though they are fully fluent in English. She even gives them complicated instructions in English.

"She expects them to understand," Ms. Uresti says. "Children will perform according to what you expect."

It is clear to the principal at Looscan that the accommodation of language handicaps reduces the expectations that teachers and other educators have for limited-English-speaking children, and perhaps has hindered those children in their efforts to learn the language.

"Definitely, they've lowered expectations," Ms. Uresti says. "They just don't expect these children to do better because they don't speak English."

At another of Houston's poor, predominantly Hispanic elementary schools — where third graders are nevertheless reading at the national average — none of the pupils receive any instruction in Spanish at any time. The school is part of an experimental program to see how well children learn English when that is the only language they are exposed to.

The "total immersion" program at Field Elementary School is part of a three-year project being conducted by the Texas Education Agency. Seven elementary schools in Houston are participating in the pilot program to determine how well children can learn English if they are totally immersed in that language.

"We're real excited about it," Field Principal Mary Nikirk says.

Field Elementary School enrolls a large number of children who speak virtually no English at all, and under the new total immersion program they receive all of their instruction in English plus one or two hours of extra English language lessons daily.

According to Mrs. Nikirk, the new total immersion program is a vast improvement over the old bilingual program, where students received some instruction in their native tongue.

"When we had the regular bilingual program, by the fourth grade, students were at least two years behind," she said.

But with the new program, even relatively new arrivals from Mexico are but one year behind after only a few months in the total immersion program.

The probable results of the TEA experiment in total immersion are likely to provoke a major controversy over the future of bilingual and ESL education in Texas.

"I could certainly see Texas — and not *just* Texas — say, 'Thank God, we don't have to worry about those kids' native language. We can teach them in English, which is what we thought all along,' " says Troike, whose hometown is Brownsville.

Troike said bilingual education has never been popular with some Texas

educators. He described a hearing in Austin several years ago on the state bilingual education plan: "One superintendent stood up and said, 'I believe the best way to teach English is by the paddle.' And his fellow superintendents applauded.

"That attitude is still surviving under the surface," Troike says.

Bilingual education advocates and opponents continue to debate its educational effectiveness. Critics contend that bilingual education is nothing more than a way to maintain a separate political base within the American political arena. They say bilingual education is politics, and nothing more.

Troike disagrees.

He says the Lau decision — the famous 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision requiring school districts to use special programs to help children who speak little or no English — was the result of a civil rights lawyer looking around for a "cause to get involved with".

"He had to talk the family into agreeing to allow their kids to be plaintiffs in the case," Troike said. "Initially there was no political push for it at all.

"People who originally advanced the idea of bilingual education were primarily people in the foreign language field," he says. "There was really no political push for it.

"I think only the Anglos who are opposed to it for a variety of reasons look at it and assume it's a political issue, when it has only become that laterally as far as Spanish groups are concerned," Troike says. "Only recently and peripherally have political groups gotten interested.

"On the other side of the coin," Troike says, "it is my own very strong feeling that if you look at the federal, and most of the state mandates for bilingual education, they are predicated on the notion of trying to eradicate the native language, and this is a more humane way to do it.

"Teach them in their native language just to the point where they learn English, and then dump their native language," he says.

'Black English': Valid language or waste of time?

"She be busy, so he going home wif me."

The language that many black youngsters use at home and in their neighborhoods is the same language they bring to school. And that "non-standard dialect" — more commonly called "Black English" — has ignited a debate among educators and linguists over the value and place of that special form of the English language in American public schools.

"Children have to bring their language with them. They don't have another," says Yvonne Ewell, the highest-ranking black woman in the Dallas Independent School District. "A child's language has to have a place. If not, the child doesn't have a place."

When Ms. Ewell headed DISD's former all-black East Oak Cliff Subdistrict, which was dismantled last year by the federal courts, her staff developed a special language program for its schools that incorporated Black English and trained teachers to be sensitive to the language differences of their pupils.

Similar programs had been developed by other urban school systems; one was even ordered by a federal judge in Ann Arbor, Mich., to help pupils overcome language handicaps that often stand in the way of learning to read.

But in the few predominantly black schools of Texas' poor city neighborhoods at which third-grade pupils are reading at the national average, Black English does not receive favored treatment. In most, it is taboo.

A Dallas Times Herald study of how reading is taught successfully to disadvantaged urban children found that those schools use only standard English in the classroom. When children use standard English incorrectly, they are corrected quickly — a practice that supporters of Black English do not like.

"We are going to use standard English in the school environment," says Thad-

deus Lott, the black principal of Wesley Elementary School in Houston. Black English, he says, is a "waste of time and uncalled for. That is not real life for children, not the kind of world they are going to face."

Rudolph Troike, a linguistics specialist and former head of the Center for Applied Linguistics, says proponents of Black English believe that "by being over-critical, you have a negative impact on kids' self-image and, consequently, on their motivation."

"But never to my knowledge has that been tested in any controlled way," says Troike, who is currently a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He says the negative-impact contention is based on "suppositions, rather than hard research."

The oral language program developed for the East Oak Cliff Subdistrict stated that "schools have the responsibility to teach students they can handle a variety of language forms in a variety of social settings," and that "non-acceptance of the language of children is non-acceptance of them personally."

Teachers in the East Oak Cliff Subdistrict were told they should not penalize pupils for the use of non-standard English and should not allow the child's language to have an adverse effect on how they view the child.

According to the program developed in Dallas by the East Oak Cliff staff, "Black English" is distinguished by 10 major characteristics:

- ✓ "the final consonant sound is often omitted (*hol'* for hold).
- ✓ "words which begin with *th* are pronounced as if they began with *d* (*dis* for this).
- ✓ "words ending with *th* are pronounced as if they ended with *f* (*wif* for with).
- ✓ "non-standard use of the verb *to be* (*She be busy* for She is busy).
- ✓ "double-negative (*He didn't have none* for He didn't have any).
- ✓ "addition of plural *s* to irregular plurals (*childrens, feets*).
- ✓ "consistent differences in phonological representations for certain individual words (*ax* for ask, *querstion* for question, *credict* for credit).
- ✓ "dropping inflexional endings (He *miss* the ball for He *missed* the ball).
- ✓ "double-stress of the subject (My *sister she* is gone for My *sister* is gone)
- ✓ "words which end with *r* or *re*, the final *r* sound is dropped (*stow* for store, *flow* for floor)."

Technology offers hope for improving education

WASHINGTON — A green-and-gold tunic appears on the computer screen.

Earphones in place, 5-year-old Lamika Moore is ready. So is the IBM computer in front of her.

"Say uniform," says the voice from the computer's sound track.

"Uniform," responds Lamika.

"This is the sound 'u,' " says the computer. "Say 'u.' "

"U," responds Lamika.

"Type 'u,' " the computer says.

Lamika hits the "u" key on the typewriter. A blinking "u" moves to the center of the screen.

"Say uniform," the machine says.

And so it goes, through each of the phonetic sounds that make up the word — u-n-i-f-or-m — the IBM computer and the student working together — and the child is learning to read.

That may be the future: Lamika and her classmates are part of an expensive, nationwide research experiment financed by International Business Machines Corp. to see if computers — used as an integral part of a special instruction program — can help teach children to read.

But while the cornerstone of the so-

far promising experiment — "Writing to Read" — is using technology in the teaching of reading, many of the essential elements of the program are found in a handful of schools in Texas' poorest city neighborhoods that are teaching children to read at the national average or above.

An extensive six-week study by the Dallas Times Herald of more than 40 classrooms in those schools found that 10 major factors were present in virtually all of them. Seven of those factors — high expectations, structured classrooms, strong discipline, heavy phonics drills, repetition of words and exercises, praise for students, and teachers who do not use their desks — are clearly built into "Writing to Read."

"I couldn't agree more," says "Writing to Read" creator John Henry Martin. "From my standpoint, we walk absolutely in harmony."

Early indications are that the computer program, a joint venture of IBM and Martin, is having success. After only five months in the program, many of Lamika's kindergarten classmates can read books normally used in the first-grade reading program.

"Some kindergarten students can read book No. 2 of the four-book series used in first grade," says William Dalton, principal of Congress Heights Elementary School in Anacostia, one of Washington's poorest neighborhoods. About 50 to 60 percent of the residents living in the neighborhood are on welfare, and few of their children have an opportunity for pre-school education.

Congress Heights is among the 15 of 120 elementary schools in Washington where 1,500 kindergarten and first-grade students are participating in the "Writing to Read" project. Nationwide, there are 10,000 children in 400 classrooms in 22 school districts involved in the program.

"Writing to Read" is a self-paced program in which children work in pairs at computers and then participate in other reading activities. They spend a maximum of 15 minutes at the computer, followed by a work journal in which they do written work that reinforces the computer exercises.

Children are then directed to other "stations" by the teacher, including the writing table, where they engage in creative writing using pencil and paper, and the typewriters, where they type a final draft of their compositions. They also listen to books on tape, while following along in their own books, and play games making words from individual letter sounds.

"The kids are motivated," Dalton says. "They sustain themselves. They're not bashful. They're not shy about making mistakes; they know it's part of learning.

"A child doesn't have to be perfect to express himself," he said.

Thelma Oglesby, Lamika's kindergarten teacher, says the program does more than teach young children how to read.

"They develop a love for books and reading at an early age," Mrs. Oglesby says. "The mere fact that they see they can decode and encode (break words apart and put them together by sounding them out) instills self-confidence, and I think that's essential. The speech patterns improve so much."

Thelma Michael, director of the program for the Washington school system, said educators have not yet compiled formal data on the program, but teachers have observed no difference in the rate of learning between boys and girls, even though young girls typically learn more rapidly.

Also, she said, black children are apparently learning as well as white children using "Writing to Read," and poor children are learning at the same rate as those from higher-income families.

Martin said he spent several years developing the "Writing to Read" program because he concluded it would be impossible to improve the quality of education in the United States by re-training 2 million public school teachers. An attempt to make wholesale changes in a "labor-intensive industry" is "doomed before you begin," he says.

"I came to the conclusion that the age of technology is the only hope we have for the qualitative improvement of education," Martin says.

Martin believes computers can be a significant classroom aid, though he contends that few people are designing high-quality computer programs for classroom use. Instead, most computer programs use existing workbook pages and tests and stick them on the computer screen.

He contends that school districts are wasting millions of dollars annually on computers and software. "They've been buying Steinway pianos, but nobody's written any music worth playing," he said.

The underlying theory behind his project to teach young children to read is that "anything they can say, they can write," Martin says. "Writing is speech made visible."

In contrast to most beginning reading books — which Martin said sell far short the expansive vocabulary most children have — pupils are encouraged to write anything in the "Writing to Read" program, and to spell it the way

it sounds until they eventually learn the correct, standard spelling of the word.

Therefore, a kindergarten student may write an essay using "egl" for eagle, or "too" for two.

Martin does not see that as any problem. "We have a kind of sexual fetish about spelling, which we impose on children too early and damage them for life," he said, contending that children easily adapt to standard spellings after they see them often enough as they progress in their reading.

The educator admits that his reading program "is not an easy system to manage." It requires a teacher's aide to monitor children at the computers, while leaving the teacher free to oversee all other activities the children are involved in. It requires the teacher to become a kind of supermanager during the reading lesson.

But, Martin said, the effort is worth it. In five months, the average child is beyond the primer capacity to read and write, he said.

In preliminary tests of the effectiveness of the program, Martin said, he checked three groups of first-graders who had IQs between 88 and 91, which he called "low normal." After a year, those using only a regular reading program were reading on the first-grade level, those using "Writing to Read" and a regular reading program were reading at a low second-grade level, and those using only "Writing to Read" were a year above their grade level.

According to Martin, the overall cost for the program, including materials and computers, is not great. For the full program, including the IBM Personal Computers, it will cost schools about $50 a child per year for five years on a lease/purchase basis. That price includes typewriters, teacher training, outside staff support and materials.

However, the computers will never replace teachers, Martin says.

"This will never dry a kid's eye. This will never take a kid in and make him feel warm. This will never put a Band-Aid on a kid's foot," Martin said. Instead the computer changes the teacher's role in the reading process to "teacher as tutor, teacher as editor, teacher as value judgment person."

Larry Holmstrom, manager of IBM's Personal Computer learning system, agrees.

"I don't want my kid taught by machine," Holstrom said. He said the computers merely help teachers to do a more effective job. " 'Writing to Read' takes the time to be a very patient tutor for kids and responds at the child's rate."

Holstrom said he believes "Writing to Read" is "representative of the future." He said the new program is "but an embryo" in process of using computers in education. "It is the introduction of the computer as a tutorial machine."

Part 4: Too young to read?

Educators split on how much to teach in kindergarten

Last fall, 5-year-old Kenneth walked up to the large tablet in the front of his kindergarten classroom. Pointing at each word, he repeated the Robert Louis Stevenson lines that many children learn to recite:

When I was down beside the sea
A wooden spade they gave to me
To dig the sandy shore
My holes were empty like a cup
In every hole the sea came up
Til it could come no more.

At that time, Helen Tobias, Kenneth's kindergarten teacher, said she wasn't sure whether Kenneth was reading or had simply memorized the poem in the two days the class had been reciting it along with her.

But Mrs. Tobias said she was sure of one thing: When Kenneth left kindergarten, he would know how to read. And she was right.

Kenneth, like many of his classmates at Phyllis Wheatley Elementary School in South Dallas, is now a reading whiz.

At Phyllis Wheatley, at least half the kindergarten pupils learn to read — in violation of Dallas Independent School District policy. The only one of DISD's 46 poorest elementary schools in which third graders are reading as well as at the national average breaks the rules by teaching its kindergarteners to read.

"I'm not going to go out there and slap their hands for doing it," says DISD Supt. Linus Wright. "How can you knock success?"

Yet Wright maintains that a school system such as Dallas — where "approximately 70 percent of our youngsters are culturally and educationally deprived" — must rely on kindergarten as a year to get children ready for the more rigorous education of first grade.

Baylor University Professor Betty Ruth Baker, an early childhood education expert, says that when most educators talk about using kindergarten for "readiness," they mean teaching social skills — such as getting along with other students — the school routine and fundamental skills, such as counting and identifying colors.

However, an extensive study by the Dallas Times Herald of the teaching of reading in elementary schools in Texas' poorest city neighborhoods found that most of the 18 schools whose third graders read at the national average or above use the kindergarten year to teach many youngsters to read as well.

For example, at Phyllis Wheatley in Dallas, at least 50 percent of the kindergarteners learn to read. At McDade Elementary School in Houston, another poor urban school, 60 percent of the kindergarten pupils are reading by the beginning of the second semester.

The indications of the Times Herald study — that teaching children to read earlier may have positive effects that carry through elementary school — is supported by the research of Dolores Durkin, an education professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Ms. Durkin studied children who were taught to read before they came to school. On standardized achievement tests those children consistently remained ahead of classmates who learned to read later — in school.

In a recent interview Ms. Durkin cautioned that she believes effective teaching methods and good instructional materials were crucial factors in the success of those children in her study.

But educators have long debated how to use the kindergarten year. In the early 1900s, the Kindergarten Union — an organization of kindergarten teachers in the United States — appointed a committee to determine the best teaching methods to use in kindergarten.

"They couldn't come up with anything," says Baylor Professor Baker. "This is an age-old question. It's not anything new."

The debate today is over whether to use kindergarten solely as a "readiness" year to prepare pupils for the an academic process beginning in first grade, or to use the kindergarten year to begin teaching basic subjects, including reading.

"Readiness" is a "broad term thrown around by a lot of educators," Ms. Baker says. "The child is ready to learn when he walks into your classroom."

She says most teachers, when they use the term, are talking about aspects of the child's social behavior, such as learning the school routine and how to get along with other children in a group. Pupils also work on rudimentary skills such as learning the alphabet, counting, and identifying shapes and colors.

"Our present policy calls for kindergarten to be a strict readiness program," says Wright. "We're trying to guard against a teacher skipping readiness skills (in order) to have a few (pupils) read.

"By and large," says the DISD superintendent, "I don't think everybody is ready for academics at kindergarten, not in a school system like Dallas. For the majority of our children, a comprehensive readiness program is best."

Some educators, however, dispute that.

Theodore Andersson, a retired professor at the University of Texas at Austin, who has conducted research on children who learn to read at an early age, insists that young children can and should learn to read.

"There's no question in the world about that," Andersson says. "I'm absolutely certain of it.

"Kindergarten is already much too late," he says. "It's been traditional to begin reading at 6 or 7 for so long that people have begun to think it's right."

Andersson blames that tradition on a study in the 1930s that concluded that the ideal age to begin reading was 6½. That conclusion, he says, was "gobbled up whole by educators." The problem is, he adds, "there is absolutely nothing to it."

The retired professor, who has worked with children in the Austin Independent School District, complains as well about that district's policy on the teaching of reading in kindergarten. Austin has a policy similar to Dallas, emphasizing kindergarten as a readiness year.

One kindergarten teacher he knows "defies that policy and teaches her kindergarteners to read," Andersson says. "Still, the school system is rather displeased with her work."

Large urban school systems in Texas are not the only ones that stress using kindergarten as a year of preparing rather than teaching pupils.

In San Francisco, for example, the school district is piloting a program in 96 elementary to teach the sounds of the letters, as well as some words, to kindergarteners. However, since the program covers only one new letter each week, it is a program to introduce beginning reading concepts rather than to produce fluent readers in kindergarten.

"I don't think you can say across-the-board that every kindergarten must be readiness or every kindergarten must be academic," Ms. Baker says. "I can't see kindergarten as a year of piddling and play. I also can't see it as a year where the child has no opportunity for social development."

In her book, "Learning to Read: The Great Debate," educator Jeanne Chall reports that when she polled authors of reading textbooks, she found them divided over when children should begin learning to read.

Those who backed the whole-word method — in which children first learn whole words and then the various letter sounds — believed that most children should begin at 6 years old or the first grade, and they expressed concern about efforts to get children reading at a younger age.

One of the problems cited by those authors in teaching younger children to read is the lack of preparation of most kindergarten teachers for teaching reading.

However, two-thirds of the authors who back phonics — teaching the sounds of letters first and then grouping letters to make words — believed that most children would benefit from starting earlier, at 4 or 5 years old. By that time, they argued, children already have a "good command" of spoken language.

Although educators nationwide have debated the best teaching methods for kindergarten for the better part of this century, the issue has confronted most Texas school districts for only the last 13 years. Kindergarten was not introduced into most of the state's schools until 1970.

In Texas, it is mandatory for school districts to offer kindergarten, but children are not required to attend. Under state law, children must begin attending school when they are 7 years old.

The Texas Legislature passed a bill in 1969 requiring school districts to offer kindergarten for educationally disadvantaged children, and the state began

funding the program in the 1970-71 school year. By 1973, parents of other children had organized and successfully lobbied the Legislature to pass a bill offering a half day of kindergarten for all students.

Now, school districts must offer a half day of kindergarten for all children and a full day for educationally disadvantaged pupils or those who have a limited ability to speak English. The state will fund those kindergarten offerings.

If a school district offers full day kindergarten for all children, which Dallas does, then the state will pay only for a full day for the language and educationally disadvantaged students and a half day for the others. The remainder of the cost must be picked up by the school system.

About one-fourth of Texas' 1,071 school districts offer full-day kindergarten, according to Irene Ramirez, kindergarten education specialist with the Texas Education Agency.

Few of them teach reading before the first grade.

Editorial

Individual schools responsible for student success

It is a difficult task, to be sure, but urban school systems *can* teach children from culturally deprived backgrounds to read. That rather salient fact was made abundantly clear in the series, "Reading: Finding a better way," which appeared last week in the Times Herald.

One can only conclude from the successful city school reading programs cited in the four-part series (one of which is at the Phyllis Wheatley Elementary School in South Dallas) that individual schools bear the largest single responsibility for how well students learn to read. And reading, ultimately, is the key to education and knowledge. Parents, of course, play an important role in motivating their children to excel, but teachers, principals and program administrators bear a significantly greater responsibility for achievement — especially in the vital area of reading — than many education professionals have been willing to admit or to accept in recent years. In schools where a majority of the children are failing to read at grade level, it usually is the fault of the school district personnel.

Most successful urban reading programs apparently involve structured classroom settings, strict attention to mastering standard English skills, the use of phonics in teaching students to pronounce words and to spell them (along with aspects of the so-called "look-say" memory method), close supervision of pupils, immediate corrective action when mistakes occur, praise for achievement, dedicated teachers, and, perhaps most important, high expectations of student performance.

As one elementary school principal in Houston put it, "If you push kids, they will meet the challenge."

Wheatley is the only one of Dallas' 46 poorest elementary schools at which third-graders are reading at or above the national average. But Wheatley, ironically, is violating DISD policy — by beginning to teach reading in kindergarten — and it also uses the phonics method, which runs counter to the common practice at most Dallas elementary schools.

At schools in urban areas where children perform poorly, administrators and teachers often have tried to blame social factors for their failure. As a result, poor and minority students often have been pampered with courses designed to suit "their level" and ethnic background. Some black pupils even have been told that they do not have to mas-

ter the grammar and pronunciation of standardized English and, instead, can use so-called "black English." Some Hispanics have been told that they can learn better in Spanish. As a result, some bilingual programs, instead of providing a valuable transition to English, have become an end in themselves.

Educators and administrators like to point out that in the past two decades, most urban school districts in this country have experienced substantially greater ethnic diversity. That is true, and we do not mean to minimize the many cultural and social factors involved in such a shift. But we believe there is far more to the failure of the American educational system than that. This country also has witnessed gross mismanagement of a sacred trust — the education of its children.

Many parents, black as well as white, have enrolled their children in private schools in recent years in the hopes of finding a better system of education than what is being offered by most public schools. Almost uniformly, the private schools and the best public schools emphasize the teaching of standardized English, have tough discipline requirements, give homework regularly and demand the mastering of such basic subjects as reading, writing, mathematics and the sciences. We think the educators and administrators at other public schools should take note of that and apply the same focus and high standards.

Too many teachers simply do not teach, and too many schools continue to promote students who cannot read and have not mastered even the most basic skills. We believe that such fraud must be stopped.

A teacher at Houston's Looscan Elementary School, where students' reading scores on standardized achievement tests are a full year ahead of the national average for the various grade levels, expressed what we think is the proper attitude teachers must have to impart knowledge successfully. "I see children as children, regardless of economic status. If I don't challenge them, they won't learn anything," she said.

Higher expectations clearly are a key, especially for minority and poor children. Teacher work habits also play a critical role — good teachers do not teach from behind their desks, the survey found; they move about, praise students profusely, maintain discipline and have a positive attitude toward their profession.

As a national commission concluded earlier this year, much has to be done to improve the quality of public education in this country. But we think "Reading: Finding a better way" should communicate to educators that it *can* be done. And that is an important message.

The Chicago Reporter

Illiteracy: An Education Crisis

Two Articles By Laura Washington

Programs Reach Few Unskilled Adults Despite New Literacy Push

No New Funds or Focus

More than 452,000 adults in Chicago are functionally illiterate—unable to read or write well enough to perform everyday tasks—according to the best estimates available.

But only about 60,000, or 13 percent of them, are being helped by local literacy programs.

And many of those enrolled in these programs will never complete the courses, leaving them unable to compete in an increasingly complex society that requires better reading and writing skills than ever before.

It is a problem that has been called a new national crisis.

U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell says illiteracy is a priority of his department and has appointed a special task force to study the problem. Barbara Bush, wife of Vice President George Bush, calls illiteracy an "epidemic" and is conducting a national publicity campaign.

Almost all educators say the problem is growing. Some estimate as many as 32 million adults throughout the U.S. can be classified as functionally illiterate. (See accompanying story).

Yet despite the publicity surrounding the issue of illiteracy, few experts have moved beyond the rhetoric to propose specific solutions that will work nationwide.

While many adults are falling farther behind in the race to acquire skills to keep up with a technological society, adult education programs have been unable to keep pace. They do not have the resources, organizations or effectiveness to meet the needs of unskilled adults.

In 1979, a Ford Foundation study reported that adult illiterates were "vastly underserved" and proposed a "major shift in educational policy to serve the needs of disadvantaged adults."

Despite the Bell and Bush push, federal funding for adult basic education has not increased significantly in four years.

The Reagan administration is calling for more volunteerism to serve adult literacy programs. But national and local volunteer agencies don't have the resources to combat illiteracy and are competing with non-profit groups for shrinking private funding just to survive.

Though business executives complain their workers are unprepared in basic job skills, many Chicago companies have dropped most of their in-house remedial programs.

Some experts suggest the varied efforts should cooperate and share resources and services. But most directors of literacy programs cannot even agree on the best methods of teaching adults to read.

Literacy Legacy

Literacy advocacy is nothing new. Every decade sees the launching of a new literacy program.

In World War I, the U.S. Armed Forces developed tests for recruits when officials realized many servicemen could not read. During World War II, the armed forces provided 303,000 soldiers with literacy

About the Author

LAURA WASHINGTON. Since 1980, Laura Washington has been education reporter for *The Chicago Reporter*, an investigative monthly that examines racial issues and urban affairs. Several of Washington's articles have made a significant impact on Chicago's educational scene. Washington has been a finalist twice in major journalism competitions.

Washington, 28, earned both her BA and MA degree from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. During graduate school, she served as a Washington, D.C. correspondent for two Iowa dailies. She covered everything from the U.S. Agriculture Department to the White House.

Washington was drawn to her study of adult illiteracy by her discovery that only eight percent of adults enrolled in a public school program aimed at high school equivalency diplomas were successful. Her research into adult education programs in Chicago, New York, Washington, Baltimore and San Francisco found that one of five adults are illiterate, and that resources for turning that trend around are dwindling.

training. In the 1950s, libraries began donating substantial space and personnel to tutoring programs.

In 1965, Congress created the Adult Education Program, which included Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs designed to boost literacy and job skills.

In 1970, former President Richard M. Nixon established the Right to Read Program, which promised to abolish illiteracy in 10 years. It was phased out in 1977, branded as a failure by critics because it was under-funded and too limited in its scope.

Federal Shortfall

Today, the major source of literacy programs is ABE, and critics charge that it, too, is locked into limited funds and ineffective methods.

In 1983, the Adult Education Program enrolled 2.3 million adults with a federal budget of $86.4 million and additional state subsidies. Its federal funding was $18.6 million in 1965. The Reagan administration has upped its budget to $95 million for the next school year, but that still falls short of the $100 million allocated two years ago.

As a result, Illinois programs must be cut at least 10 percent next year, says Ralph Goodman, assistant manager of the Illinois State Board of Education adult and continuing education section.

In Chicago, about 58,000 students attend adult education classes at the Chicago Urban Skills Institute (CUSI), the Chicago Board of Education and PACE Institute at Cook County Jail.

CUSI is the largest of the three, with 45,000 students and a budget of $1.8 million a year. The board of education has about 11,000 adult students and its budget is also $1.8 million.

Tutoring by Literacy Volunteers of Chicago

The Illinois State Board of Education gauges the effectiveness of adult education programs by the number of students who get jobs or further education after they take the classes. In the 1981-82 school year, about 1,364, or 2.4 percent, of those enrolled at the board of education and CUSI got jobs after completing the year. Another 1,388, or 2.5 percent, continued to advanced schooling, the state reports.

Critics of the programs claim they are disorganized bureaucracies with overcrowded classes and a shortage of counselors and teachers. They say CUSI and the public schools use a mechanical, traditional approach to instruction that alienates adults and contributes to the 50 percent dropout rate typical of public ABE programs.

"One of the problems with ABE is the dropout factor. A person who has dropped out of high school may not be successful because of personal loads. If they can't get counseling relief and attention, then you're going to have another dropout situation," says Jean Coleman, director of outreach services for the American Library Association.

Some of the teachers in the ABE program recognize these problems and are trying to address them.

Robert Friedman, an instructor at Truman College, 1145 W. Wilson Ave., is experimenting with a new approach to literacy—the learning group. The nine-month-old class of 10 students learn from each other rather than "take dictation," he says.

He combines frequent counseling, group discussions and individualized instruction to build student interest and confidence.

Rose Porche, a 35-year-old black woman, has been in many classrooms, but couldn't even understand her children's homework. "I didn't know how to learn. I would freeze up. If somebody gave me a

book, I could read the book but I couldn't tell them what I read," she says.

Friedman keeps the class size down to leave room for individualized attention for slower readers. But that becomes expensive.

Most ABE classes in Chicago range from 12 to 30 students. There are not enough resources to go around. In Illinois, 100,000 adults were on waiting lists for ABE programs in 1981. Last year, the Illinois Board of Education was able to provide only 40 percent of the total funds requested from state programs.

Bell has urged the private sector to pick up the slack in the funding shortfall. Private programs aimed at erasing illiteracy have proved to be more successful in their goals than most ABE programs, many educators concede.

Although these private programs use a variety of teaching methods, they feature characteristics that seem to reach adults better: small classes, individual attention, counseling and closer ties to the community.

But they reach far fewer adults than ABE, and suffer from a lack of funding. There also is little coordination of efforts among the different schools and agencies.

Volunteer Shortage

Volunteerism is the major route promoted by Bell to stem the tide of illiteracy.

There are two major volunteer organizations, Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach Literacy Action, that have been training reading tutors for decades.

Literacy Volunteers of America, a network of schools, libraries and community centers, trains tutors in four reading techniques. Established in Syracuse, NY in 1962, it claims 17,000 students in 165 programs.

Literacy Volunteers of Chicago is the local affiliate of Literacy Volunteers of America. It opened last year on a budget of $160,000, the result of a VISTA grant. Its target population is its estimate of 650,000 functionally illiterate adults in the Chicago area. The organization was only able to provide tutors for about 250 adults this year, according to Director George Hagenauer.

Laubach uses a method of teaching phonics (the sounding out of words by the use of vowels) developed in the Philippines 50 years ago by Methodist missionary Frank Laubach. The agency's 30,000 volunteers tutor 50,000 adults each year across the country.

The local Laubach affiliate is the Chicago Literacy Council, 220 S. State St., which has been in operation for 10 years. It tutors about 100 adults a year on a shoestring budget of $8,000.

Volunteer tutoring groups believe that one-on-one instruction with heavy emphasis on phonetics (sounding out words) is essential to teach adults, says Irene Sayre, director of the Chicago Literacy Council. Sayre is distressed that public schools and adult education programs teach reading through memorization, rather than comprehension.

Tutors at Literacy Volunteers go beyond teaching phonetics, says Hagenauer. They use "language experience stories" as reading lessons and step-by-step mastery of skills.

In addition, Hagenauer draws both students and tutors from the minority communities targeted by Literacy Volunteers.

Most volunteer agencies draw tutors from a white, middle-class, educated population. Hagenauer says his strategy is more effective. "It's difficult to implement a program in the inner city. There's not enough resources. But my basic sense is to develop a program in the community where the need is greatest."

He cites the Ford Foundation study, which stated tutors from most volunteer organizations may have difficulty working with disadvantaged adults.

Alternative Success

Because volunteer programs stress one-to-one tutoring, the cost—in time and personnel—prohibits them from reaching out to the thousands who need help.

Non-profit schools and community groups are often cited by studies as being better alternatives to the ABE programs administered by CUSI and the board of of education.

Chicago's Alternative Schools Network, a group of 20 non-profit schools, enroll about 2,000 adults. The schools tie education to students' environment and address political and social objectives along with reading and writing.

Since functional illiterates lack survival skills, educators must emphasize skills students can apply in life, says Javier Saracho. Saracho teaches literacy for Centro Latino/Universidad Popular, 1045 W. Belmont Ave. The community school specializes in "native literacy, or literacy in Spanish."

"We go beyond the concept of illiteracy as a mechanical process. We want them to think about the things that surround them," Saracho relates.

During a recent math class, Saracho's students calculated, in Spanish, the salary one of the students, a housewife, would earn if she were paid for her labor: $60 a day.

Saracho, a native Spaniard, is a student of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator who proposes that education is an active exercise that enables adults who feel powerless to change their lives. The philosophy has been the force behind successful literacy campaigns in Nicaragua and Cuba.

Rene Arceo believes teaching literacy takes only two routes. "Education is political. Any teaching is political. Either you make people more conscious of what's going on around them, or you can take advantage of their passivity," says Arceo, a literacy teacher at Instituto del Progreso Latino, a school at 1831 S. Racine Ave. Arceo encourages his students to get involved in community politics, cultural affairs and current events.

The Alternative Schools Network has been immersed in a three-year struggle to obtain public adult education money through the Illinois State Board of Education. State regulations prohibit direct funding of non-profit agencies. Private schools must contract with CUSI or the board of education to get money. That means they must adhere to the public schools' curriculum, administration and philosophy, which alternative schools resist.

"It becomes an issue of who controls the programs," says Jack Wuest, the network's director.

Wuest and other community educators argue they offer the best services to disadvantaged adults and should receive federal and state ABE grants.

Community educators point to Solidaridad Humana, located on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

The Latino school was born in 1971 when six people met in a small apartment to study English. The enrollment has grown to over 1,000 students who attend adult education classes.

Solidaridad Humana (human solidarity) was founded on a "holistic" philosophy, says Executive Director Dino Pacio Lindin. "One has to learn to listen before one can read and write. Forget about reading and writing for a long time, and have people talk, listen and express themselves through folklore, poems, song," Lindin advises.

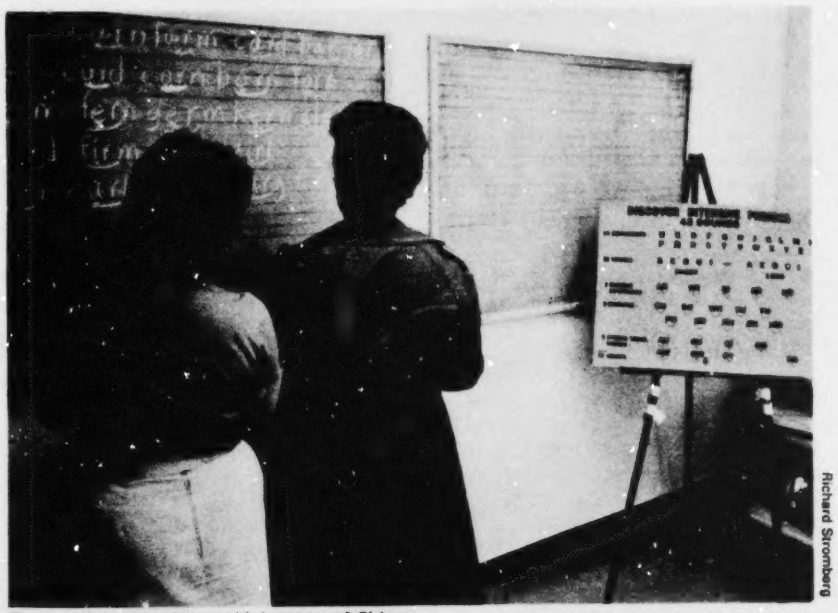
New York state granted about $600,000 directly to community programs last year. Solidaridad received 20 percent of that sum. Its two-year-old literacy program has a low dropout rate—20 percent, says Dan Rabideau, Spanish coordinator.

Corporate Cutback

One of the main goals of all literacy programs is to prepare functionally illiterate adults for the job market. For years, corporations have been concerned about the quality of job applicants.

The Conference Board, a New York-based business research group, found that 35 percent of the companies it surveyed nationally offer some remedial aid to employees.

In 1976, the Reporter located eight companies that were spending a combined total of $1 million annually on



Richard Stromberg

Tutor training by Literacy Volunteers of Chicago

remedial education (see "Eight Chicago Major Employers Teach Basic Skills in Company Schools; Criticize Lack of Job Preparedness Among Public High School Graduates," *The Chicago Reporter,* January 1976).

The companies, including Illinois Bell Telephone Co., Sears Roebuck and Co., and First Chicago Corp., offered entry level employees in-house training in fundamental reading, writing, typing and math, the Reporter found.

But an update reveals that all of these companies have cut or eliminated the in-house classes.

Peoples Gas, Light and Coke Co. was once involved in about four remedial programs in cooperation with the Chicago public schools. The need for such programs has diminished recently, says spokesman Ed Joyce. "Because of the economy, people with more skills are coming to us for jobs," Joyce says. All are being turned away, however. Peoples Gas has been under a hiring freeze for 18 months.

Most corporate activity these days is centered on General Schools Superintendent Ruth B. Love's Adopt-a-School program.

The program encourages major corporations and other organizations to "adopt" a public school and provide its students with tutoring and technical services, equipment and supplies, and perhaps a glimpse into the world of work through work-study programs in the high schools. Currently, 126 businesses and 12,000 students participate.

Business should get involved in remedial services for older adults, says Regina Polk, a union training coordinator who places laid-off workers in training programs. "If people are going to be retrained, that mechanism has got to include basic education. There are so many older people who can't take advantage of retraining for technical jobs until they get the basic education," she says.

For example, at the Polaroid Corp. in Cambridge, Mass., 300 workers take basic math and English classes to enhance their job skills. Half the students end up in higher-level jobs at the end of the program, according to Linda Stoker, director of Polaroid's Fundamental Skills Program.

Better Connections

As successful as the private literacy programs are in teaching basic skills, they remain scattered and under-funded—and often isolated from each other.

Peter A. Waite, executive director of Laubach Literacy Action, admits scattered volunteer efforts cannot effectively address widespread illiteracy among adults. Last fall he told a congressional subcommittee that a coordinated effort among volunteers, community groups and public schools is needed. "We have not made a serious impact on the problem," he says.

The Campaign for Literacy, which was first convened last year, hopes to address that issue through a national effort that will explore new ways to improve literacy programs.

But the new organization, comprised of 10 national groups, faces the problem of all literacy programs—it must raise $250,000 to fund the project for its first year of operation.

Richard Stromberg

Tutoring by Literacy Volunteers of Chicago at Howard Community Center

Functional Illiteracy Traps Minorities As Demands for Higher Skills Increase

"Trouble."

For most of his life, Edward Saddler, 26, could not read that word.

It describes his life. He never went to school past the second grade because of a spinal injury.

Idle and on the streets, he was convicted of murder at age 13. Saddler's lawyer asked him to sign a paper. "He said it would get me some probation, so I signed it. I got sent up for 15 years," he says.

Once out of prison, he got a job, but still could not lead a normal live. When he wanted to go to the Loop, he walked for six hours from his far South Side home. He could not read CTA signs.

Educators might describe Saddler as "functionally illiterate"—not able to read well enough to function successfully in life.

Functional illiteracy has been labeled an "epidemic" by federal officials. Lately blasts of information about illiteracy have shaken the public. Some warn illiteracy may unravel America's social and economic fabric.

"The number of illiterates in this country is large—and it is growing," U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell told a congressional subcommittee last fall.

"Today's post-industrial society is based on rapid technological change and instantaneous communication," he added. "Our society demands continuous learning as a necessity for personal survival, effectiveness and fulfillment."

Bell and others say that adults unable to read at today's standards are a drag on industry, business and their own ambitions.

Chicago educators are calling for a citywide campaign against illiteracy. "This is a major social and economic problem. It has to be raised as a major issue," says Jack Wuest, director of Alternative Schools Network, a group of private, non-profit schools for adults.

This well-meaning avalanche of publicity has buried the real issue: no one really knows what illiteracy is, how many people it affects or how to curb it.

Hard to Define

Experts cannot agree on a precise definition of "literacy."

Simple literacy means the ability to read and write. Virtually everyone in the United States today can perform that task.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines an "illiterate" as anyone with less than a sixth-grade education and who cannot read or write.

In 1880, census takers counted about 17 percent of the U.S. population as illi-

terate. One hundred years later, in 1980, only 0.6 percent fit that category. Rosalind Bruno, a census bureau statistician, readily admits, "Its no longer a good measure by today's standards."

"We once used the definition that someone was illiterate if they read below the fifth-grade level. But that doesn't work today. It's a matter of competency," says Jorie L. Mark, services section chief of the adult education services division of the U.S. Department of Education.

Now, educators have a new tag: "functional literacy."

"There's a big difference between simple literacy and functional literacy. Statistically, we look like a very literate population. Functional literacy is more of a cultural definition than a statistical definition," says Jean Coleman, director of outreach services for the American Library Association.

Literacy today is an exercise in "functions"—ability to perform typical reading, writing and mathematics tasks encountered in everyday life. Generally, functionally literate adults should be able to complete a job application; pen a business letter; order a meal and leave a tip in a restaurant; and decipher a doctor's prescription.

Those who complete at least six years of grade school should read minimally, experts say. But an adult should read at sixth-grade level to understand a driver's license manual; at eighth-grade level to figure out directions for preparing a TV dinner; and at 12th-grade level to make sense of an insurance policy.

Functional literacy may also depend on residence and occupation. It doesn't matter if a farmer in southern Illinois can't read a CTA service manual. But he does need to understand federal regulations governing the U.S. grain exchange program.

It wasn't until 1975 that researchers began to measure functional literacy. A University of Texas study, the Adult Performance Level Project, is the best literacy yardstick available, according to most educators. The study tested a cross section of adults nationwide in skills like counting and converting currency, comparison shopping or interpreting a child's report card.

Researchers found that one-fifth of American adults—32 million—"function with difficulty." That is more people than the population of Canada. Another 33.9 percent are competent enough to perform simple tasks, and nearly half—46.3 percent—mastered most skills tested.

The proportion of residents in large cities who are illiterate is a bit higher than the national estimate—21 percent—the study found. The number of Chicago's 2.1 million adults who are illiterate based on that percentage would be about 452,000.

Others claim there may be more. National estimates range from 13 million to 72 million. And as many as 650,000 Chicagoans may be fuctionally illiterate, according to Literacy Volunteers of Chicago, a non-profit organization that provides tutoring services.

Though a final tally is elusive, educators have no doubt about who dominates the ranks of the illiterate. About 44 percent of black and 56 percent of Latino adults fit the category, compared with 16 percent of white adults, the study shows.

Forty percent of functional illiterates come from families with annual incomes of less than $5,000, and 36 percent are unemployed.

A Chicago profile of a typical functional illiterate emerges as a person with no high school diploma; unemployed or in a low-paying job; black or Latino; and aged 25 to 60.

Embarrassment

Many are demoralized and ashamed of their handicap. "It's the last great closet constituency," says Michael Fox, director of PLAN, a Washington, D.C. literacy program.

It's difficult to imagine Salvador Medina cowering in a closet. The husky, 28-year-old Mexican sports a tough-guy look: donned in red-plaid shirt and scruffy jeans, he peers from beneath a black cap bulging with thick, unruly hair.

"I was ashamed to start this class," Medina confesses at a recent literacy class at Truman College, 1145 W. Wilson Ave. "I was ashamed of myself, afraid to face myself. This is the first time I stepped into a school since I was 19."

Like many Latinos, Medina carries a double load. He is illiterate in both Spanish and English.

Rose Porche, 35, stayed in school until she was 16, but she never got an eighth-grade diploma. She languished for years in a class for the mentally handicapped. Porche claims she was misplaced. "I was no dummy," the short, stout black woman asserts with cool self-confidence.

Still, the idea of returning to school terrified her. "I was scared. I had the shakes. It took me a while to realize there's a lot of things you think you know that you don't. It hurts when you can't sit down and deal with them."

Porche has developed a keen sense of survival she wants to share. "We've experienced a lot of things (in life) and we want to express them, but we don't know how," she says.

A look around the nation turns up more examples of adults struggling for skills many Americans take for granted.

A Washington, D.C. black man who drives a school bus cannot read street signs. "I know a stop sign is red," he says. A Chicago factory worker always smoked on the job, until he was told the sign nearby read, "Danger: flammable." In restaurants, a San Francisco man always orders a hamburger. He won't admit he cannot read the menu. In Baltimore, a 50-year-old professional cook says she has never read a recipe.

Second Generation

But functional illiteracy is not confined to adults who are out of school. Although everyone today is guaranteed a 12th-grade education, educators fear illiteracy may in fact be growing among the young.

"We do have educational opportunities, but for every educational opportunity, there's a way of dropping through the cracks. People are getting out of high school with no skills at all, or skills so poor they cannot use them for everyday living," says Coleman of the American Library Association.

Youths in school often read far below grade level. In the fall of 1981, Chicago public high school juniors scored at the 25th percentile in reading achievement tests, a drop of five percentile points since 1974. The national average is at the 50th percentile.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress estimates that between 5 percent and 10 percent of American high school students graduate "without the basic reading and writing skills needed to survive in today's world." The assessment regularly surveys achievement among American students.

> **'The concept of a fundamental education has changed and the standards have risen.'**

Many young adults never even finish high school. Each year, 850,000 teenagers drop out of school, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

And although the Chicago Board of Education estimates 32 percent to 36 percent of the public high school students drop out, the Reporter has found that more than half of the ninth-grade students never graduate (see "School System Abandons Dropouts as Rate Hits 55 Percent," *The Chicago Reporter,* May 1980).

Demanding Jobs

Older dropouts face a different dilemma—the changing nature of work may shrink their value on the job market.

Six months ago, some 1,400 workers at a local mail-order house would have been shocked to hear themselves referred to as functionally illiterate. Many of the packers, clerks and stock personnel had worked at Aldens, Inc. for 25 to 30 years, and some had dropped out of high school years ago for a solid and secure job at the plant, 5000 W. Roosevelt Rd.

"Back then, it was perfectly natural to leave school before graduation for a good job," says Regina Polk, training coordinator for the Warehouse, Mail Order, Office, Technical and Professional Employees Union Local 743, which represents Alden's workers.

Last Christmas, they were laid off when the plant closed down, and now they find they have few marketable skills.

"The market is very different. Employers who would hire warehouse people without a high school diploma before don't have to any longer. The concept of having a fundamental education has changed and the standards have risen," Polk says.

Some are still in unemployment lines. Of the 400 workers Polk is helping apply for retraining programs, 120 could not pass a high school-level skills test. In a sense, they have suddenly become functionally illiterate.

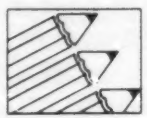
"It's traumatic for them. These are people who were very competent in their jobs. These people used to be independent," Polk explains. "Now they are 50 years old and they have to go sit in classes with 18-year-olds. Who the hell wants to admit they're 50 years old and don't know what an 18-year-old should know?"

Because the definition of literacy is molded by society's demands, education must be shaped to fit with an increasingly technological society. Fifty years ago, a secretary needed only the ability to type. Today, a secretary must operate a word-processor, translate technical contracts and handle office orders and purchases.

Such expectations are impossible for an adult who can barely read a letter or double-check a restaurant bill. The disadvantaged adult may be hard pressed to become a responsible citizen. The burden of progress and the pull of poverty may lock many adults on an educational treadmill.

Journalism Fellows

Since 1976 The Institute for Educational Leadership has administered The Fellows in Education Journalism Program, enabling journalists to conduct studies of education and related social issues. Journalists who have participated in this Fellowship program and their study topics are listed by year.



1976

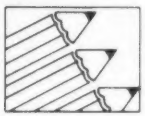
DAVID BEDNAREK	*The Milwaukee Journal* Milwaukee, WI	Desegregation
MICHAEL BOWLER	*The Sun* Baltimore, MD	Textbook Selection
HELEN CARRINGER	*The Beacon Journal* Akron, OH	Parent Power
JAMES A. KILLACKY	*The Daily Oklahoman* Oklahoma City, OK	Teacher Unions
JACQUELYN KING	*WRR News Radio* Dallas, TX	Testing
ANDREW MILLER	*The Kansas City Star* Kansas City, KS	Testing
LAEL MORGAN	*Tundra Times* Fairbanks, AK	Bilingual Education
LINDA STAHL	*The Courier-Journal* Louisville, KY	Basic Skills
STANLEY WELLBORN	*U.S. News & World Report* Washington, DC	Federal Education Policy

1977

CONSTANTINE ANGELOS	*The Seattle Times* Seattle, WA	Basic Skills
MURIEL COHEN	*The Boston Globe* Boston, MA	Teacher Education
REBECCA KUZINS	*The Muskegon Chronicle* Muskegon, MI	Special Education
LORENZO MIDDLETON	*The Washington Star* Washington, DC	Desegregation
CYNTHIA PARSONS	*The Christian Science Monitor* Boston, MA	School Finance
WAYNE F. REILLY	*The Bangor Daily News* Bangor, ME	Competency Based Testing
DALE ALAN RICE	*The Post-Standard* Syracuse, NY	Magnet Schools

1978

HUNTLY COLLINS	*The Oregonian* Portland, OR	Gifted & Talented Education
JIMMIE COVINGTON	*The Commercial Appeal* Memphis, TN	Competency Based Testing
JOE DONOVAN	*KYW News Radio* Philadelphia, PA	Basic Skills
GARY FIFE	*United Indian Planners News* Washington, DC	Indian Education
ROBERT FRAHM	*The Journal Times* Racine, WI	Competency Based Testing
DIANE GRANAT	*Chicago Daily Herald* Arlington Heights, IL	Parent Power
SAUNDRA IVEY	*The Tennessean* Nashville, TN	School Finance: Tax Revolt Issues
RICK JANKA	*The Milwaukee Sentinel* Milwaukee, WI	Achieving Quality Education
ROSA MORALES	*KCET Television* Los Angeles, CA	Desegregation
ETHEL PAYNE	*St. Louis Sentinel* St. Louis, MO	Black Colleges
DONALD SPEICH	*Los Angeles Times* Los Angeles, CA	Effect of Proposition 13
MONTE TRAMMER	*The Sun* Baltimore, MD	Declining Enrollments and School Closing
LINDA WILLIAMS	*Daily Herald/South Mississippi Sun* Biloxi, MS	School Finance Patterns in the South



1979*

ROBERT BENJAMIN	*Cincinnati Post* Cincinnati, OH	Educating Low-Income Students
JOHN CUMMINS	*The Salt Lake Tribune* Salt Lake City, UT	Education in High-Growth Areas
CHRISTIE DUNPHY	*The Evening Gazette* Worcester, MA	Declining Enrollment in High Schools
CHARLES HARDY	*The Charlotte Observer* Charlotte, NC	Black Achievement/Operation Push

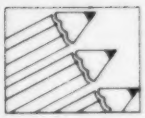
WISTA JOHNSON	*The New York Amsterdam News* New York, NY	Health Education in Urban Schools
MARK LIFF	*New York Daily News* New York, NY	Education of Indochinese Refugees
BETTE ORSINI	*St. Petersburg Times* St. Petersburg, FL	Suicide/Depression on College Campuses
BARBARA REINHARDT	*Options in Education* National Public Radio Washington, DC	Teenage Pregnancy and the Schools
LINDA WERTSCH	*Chicago Sun-Times* Chicago, IL	Teacher Accountability
FRAN ZUPAN	*The Columbia Record* Columbia, SC	Sex Barriers in Job Preparation
JANE EISNER	*The Virginia-Pilot* Norfolk, VA	What's Effective in Virginia's Integrated Schools
JACK KENNEDY	*The Lincoln Journal* Lincoln, NE	Rural vs. Consolidated Districts: What's Effective in Nebraska
JANET KOLODZY	*Arkansas Democrat* Little Rock, AR	What's Effective in Arkansas Schools
MARGO POPE	*The Florida Times-Union* Jacksonville, FL	What's Effective in Florida's Suburban Schools
WAYNE REILLY	*Bangor Daily News* Bangor, ME	What's Effective in the Rural Schools of Maine
M. WILLIAM SALGANIK	*The Sun* Baltimore, MD	Academic Achievement in Urban Schools: What Works in Baltimore
ROBERT BENJAMIN	*The Cincinnati Post* Cincinnati, OH	Towards Effective Urban Schools: A National Study

* In 1979, one group of Fellows looked at general education issues; a second group focused on "What Makes Effective Schools?"

1980–81

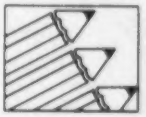
MEA ANDREWS	*Missoulian* Missoula, MT	Middle Schools in Montana
LINDA AUSTIN	*Dallas Times Herald* Dallas, TX	How High Schools Serve Minorities in Texas

JOHN MCMANUS	*The Ledger-Star* Norfolk, VA	How Inner City Schools Work for Minority Children
ELIZABETH OLDER	*Charleston Daily Mail* Charleston, WV	From Coal Mines to Gifted Education
CAROL RUBENSTEIN	*Oregon Journal* Portland, OR	How Elementary Schools Work for Four Different Minority Groups
STEPHANIE SEVICK	*The Hartford Courant* Hartford, CT	Schools That Work in "Gold Coast" Towns
PATRICIA SULLIVAN	*Sun Sentinel* Fort Lauderdale, FL	Schools That Serve the Gifted in Florida



1982

CHARLOTTE GRIMES	*St. Louis Post-Dispatch* St. Louis, MO	Girls and the Law
WILEY HALL	*The Evening Sun* Baltimore, MD	Getting Tough with Violent Juvenile Offenders
LESLIE HENDERSON	*The Knoxville Journal* Knoxville, TN	Violent Juvenile Crime in East Tennessee: A Family Perspective
ANDREW PETKOFSKY	*The Richmond News Leader* Richmond, VA	Locks and Lessons: Virginia's Reform Schools
WOODY REGISTER	*The Tennessean* Nashville, TN	Juvenile Incarceration and Alternatives in Tennessee
GARY STRAUSS	*The Idaho Statesman* Boise, ID	Juvenile Justice in Idaho



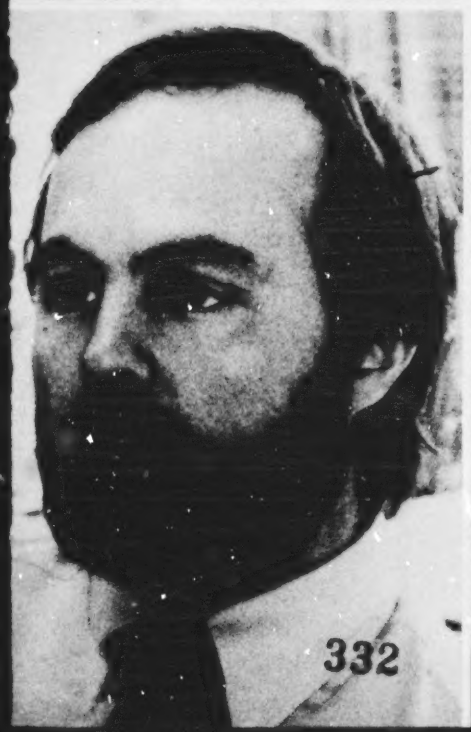
1983

JAMES BENCIVENGA	*The Christian Science Monitor* Boston, MA	Big City Schools and Technology
ROBERT A. FRAHM	*The Journal Times* Racine, WI	Minorities: Classroom Crisis
JOHN C. FUREY	*Statesman Journal* Salem, OR	Southeast Asian Refugees in Schools
AMY GOLDSTEIN	*The Virginian-Pilot* Norfolk, VA	The Effects of Dismantling Mandatory Busing
JACALYN GOLSTON	*The Fresno Bee* Fresno, CA	The Struggle For Integration
DALE RICE	*Dallas Times Herald* Dallas, TX	Urban Schools that Effectively Teach Children to Read
LAURA WASHINGTON	*The Chicago Reporter* Chicago, IL	Illiteracy: An Education Crisis
LINDA WALLACE WILLIAMS	*The Commercial Appeal* Memphis, TN	Business-Education Coalitions

1983*

BIDAL AGUERO	*El Editor* Lubbock, TX	The Role of the Local University in Educating Chicano Children
BRUCE BARTON	*The Carolina Indian Voice* Pembroke, NC	Is One School System the Best System for Lumbee Indian?
ALBERT E. BRUNO	*The Dakota Sun* Fort Yates, ND	Tribally Controlled Community Colleges
JOSE A. BURCIAGA	*El Observador* San Jose, CA	Latino Youth Who Don't Finish High School
MILTON JORDAN	*The Carolina Times* Durham, NC	From School to Work: A Leap of Despair
LINDA OGAWA RAMIREZ	*Philippine News* South San Francisco, CA	Counseling for Filipino Students
RICHARD J. SMITH	*MainStream Newsletter* Plymouth-Canton Community Schools Plymouth, MI	Indian Children in Detroit

*Study Grantees: In 1983 IEL awarded one week study grants to Journalists from minority news organizations.



Laura Washington
Milton Jordan
Linda Ogawa Ramirez
Richard J. Smith
Albert E. Bruno
Amy Goldstein
Bidal Aguero
Jacalyn Golston
Bruce Barton
James Bencivenga
Linda Wallace Williams
Dale Rice
John C. Furey
Robert A. Frahm
Jose A. Burciaga

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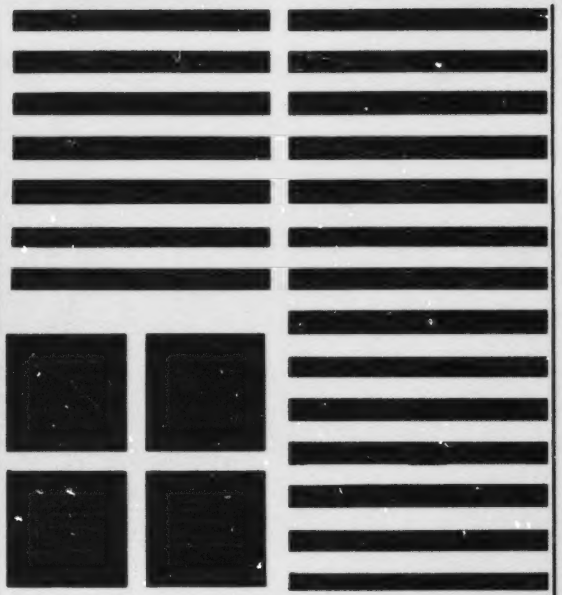
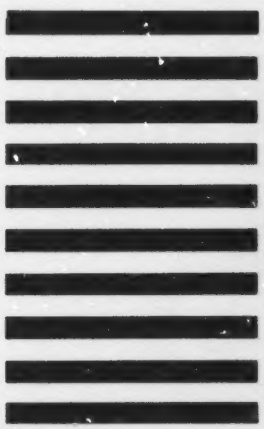
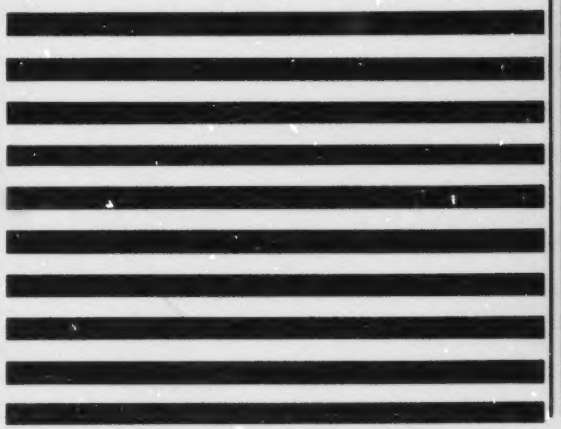
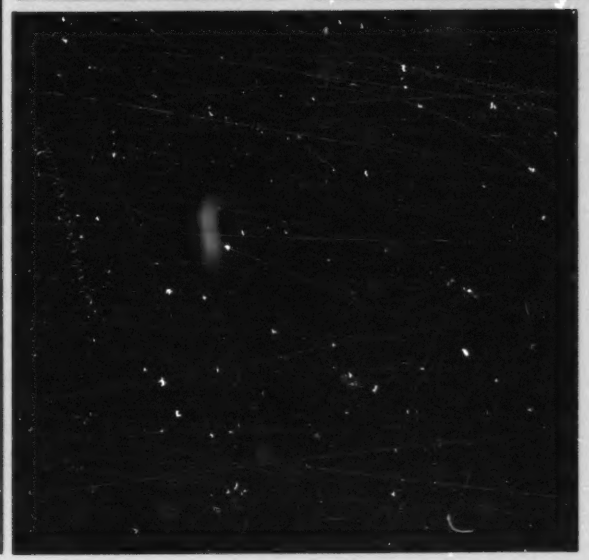


Reading in Urban Schools

Desegregation in the Eighties







ISBN 0-937846-95-3